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**OH BABEL!**

**THE PROBLEMS OF TRANSLATING MALAY VERSE  
INTO ENGLISH**

***Hasnah binti Haji Ibrahim***

***Submitted for the degree of Ph.D.  
UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK***

***Graduate School Of Translation Studies And Comparative  
Literary Theory***

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The study owes a great deal to previous works. Those that are directly relevant to the problem have been cited and/or quoted. But there are others, less direct, but by no means less important, sources of reference, parts of which may have been used, unconsciously, and therefore, not cited--works which have influenced a choice of words here, a turn of speech there, creating tantalizingly familiar echoes of 'something read somewhere'. These, regretfully, are not listed in the bibliography, but gratefully acknowledged here.

The work upon which this study is based is, however, Bassnett-McGuire's *Translation Studies*, which posed all the questions that have guided and shaped this research. Grateful thanks to Professor Abdullah Hassan of Universiti Sains Malaysia for introducing the book in 1984.

Finally, it must not be forgotten that the study is possible only because there is a 'tradition' and this owes its existence to the men who started it--officers of the colonial civil service--i.e., the *precursors* of the tradition. To one and all, I can only say in time-honoured Malay fashion:

*Pisang emas dibawa belayar  
Masak sebiji di atas peti;  
Hutang emas boleh kubayar,  
Hutang budi kubawa mati.*

Hasnah binti Hj. Ibrahim  
Sekolah Bahasa dan Pemikiran Saintifik  
Universiti Utara Malaysia  
Sintok, Kedah  
Malaysia 06010.

### ***DECLARATION***

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my own research specifically for this doctoral programme.

Hasnah Ibrahim

(Hasnah binti Haji Ibrahim)

## **SUMMARY**

The study, as explained in the Prologue, was begun with the aim of compiling and analysing the problems of translating Malay verse into English. However, because the tradition is little known outside its birthplace, Chapters I and II trace the birth and perpetuation of the Malayo-English tradition of verse translation, giving examples of the translations carried out, and drawing attention to the problems encountered. These chapters also seek to identify the reasons for translating.

The anomalous practice of translating into a language which is not the translator's native language-- which is rampant in the tradition studied--as well as the variety of modes encountered, necessitate a search for a theoretical framework which would accommodate such facts of the tradition. Chapter III elaborates on the theoretical considerations made out and the methodology adopted.

The theoretical considerations show that such a framework could be provided by a working definition, if it is rigorous enough to differentiate translation from its kindred activities, such as parody, yet flexible enough to accommodate the various acceptable modes of translation. A pro-tem working definition of the translation process is proposed in Chapter IV.

The practical implications of this definition are discussed in Chapters V and VI. Chapter V discusses the effects of the independent variables on the actual translating process; i.e., how each of the independent variables identified in the definition of the process could give rise to a spectrum of translation pathways, and thereby to a variety of translation products. It is realised at this juncture that to enable a descriptive analysis of the translation process/products, these modes have not only to be identified but also to be systematically named. Chapter VI describes the translation spectrum and proposes a system of labelling the components of the translation spectrum.

Chapter VII attempts an objective reviewal of the study, assessing its contribution to knowledge, whilst making clear its limitations and its dependence on earlier works. The study closes with an Epilogue.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CCD	The New Collins Concise Dictionary
DBP	Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka
GLT	A Glossary of Literary Terms
JMBRAS	Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society
JSBRAS	Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society
LLD	Language/s of Limited Diffusion
OCEL	The Oxford Companion to English Literature
OED	The Oxford English Dictionary
PPM	Persatuan Penterjemah Malaysia
SOED	The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary
ST	Source Text
TL	Target Language
TLC	Target Language Community
TP	Translated Product
TDP	Trans-Derived Product
TPT	Elements of Time-Place-Tradition
TT	Target Text

## PROLOGUE

A prologue can suitably alert the (readers), and (sketch) for them things to look out for. It can disown irrelevant aims and discourage inappropriate expectations . . .

I. A. Richards in  
*Beyond*

More than a century has passed since Malay verse was first translated into English, and yet except for the odd critique or two (see, for example, Barclay M. Newman 1976:42-43; Muhammad Hj. Salleh 1977:20-21 and in Asmah Haji Omar 1979:139-150; Siti Hawa Salleh 1987),[1] not much has been written on the quality of the translations produced, and still less on how "[to] distil[] the rules that will in future, guarantee the production of optimal translations" (André Lefevere 1985). This is regrettable since even a cursory survey of modern translations of Malay verse into English would reveal an urgent need for some sort of guidelines. Moreover, despite the generally unsatisfactory translations produced, translating activities have actually increased within the last decade. This seems to suggest a lack of awareness of (or worse, a complete disregard for) the complexities of the translation process in general, and the problems of translating Malay verse into English in particular. The latter suggestion, negative though it sounds, must be considered, as it actually reflects recognition, albeit grudging, of the importance of translations. It is consistent with the observation that the general feeling (among living authors at least) is, better to be translated badly than not to be translated at all.[2]

In the absence of guidelines and systematic critical assessments, the generally inadequate workmanship leaves room for hope that even a slight awareness of the complexities of the translation process might induce greater care to be exercised in future translations; it is of course inconceivable that the artist and craftsman necessarily inherent in every translator of literary works would be indifferent to any measure that might improve her/his craft. It is with such hope and conviction therefore that this study seeks to compile and analyse the problems of translating Malay verse into English. That even this might prove too ambitious an undertaking is brought home by the words of G. Van Slype et al., who, facing a similar situation, remark of the scope of their study that:

because the ground it covers is still relatively new and, given the limited resources available[,] the study can provide only an initial survey of the problem and is more likely to raise questions than to provide the answers to them. (Van Slype et al. 1983:9)

**NOTES FOR PROLOGUE:**

- [1] Muhammad Haji Salleh is listed as Muhammad in the bibliography, Asmah Haji Omar as Asmah, and Siti Hawa Salleh as Siti Hawa.
- [2] This sentiment may not be admitted openly, though, and may even be disguised. Sujit Mukherjee in his excellent and frank discussion of the problems of translating modern Indian writing into English in India quotes the following illuminating anecdote:

Adil Jussawalla, editor of the finest anthology in recent years of Indian writing, *New Writing in India* (Penguin Books 1974), has complained, 'I'm afraid very fine Indian writers whom I respect encourage a careless attitude in terms of the English translation they permit of their own work. I find their defence of carelessness quite bizzare. The defence is basically that he or she doesn't care to be translated well because the English world and its values are not important to the writer.' Yet many writers are so anxious to be represented in English that they have been known to exhort or sponsor translators to render their works into English. (Mukherjee 1981:136)

Considering that, as Mukherjee observes further, "since 1913 [i.e., since Tagore won the Nobel Prize for literature], if not earlier, many Indian writers have been convinced that [one] . . . way to catch the literary eye or ear of the rest of the world is by . . . getting translated into English", the excuse given above for tolerating careless translation is unlikely to be an expression of either inverted snobbery, or fervent nationalism. See also Rika Lesser's comments on the experience of translating living poets (in Weissbort 1989:125), and Burton Raffel's comment in *The Forked Tongue* (1971:98) that "poets like being translated".



## CHAPTER I: THE BIRTH OF A TRADITION

Bless me, sir, a terrible progeny!  
they belong to the tribe of Incubi

The Rev. Dr. Folliot, in  
*Crotchet Castle*

"Traditions do not 'arise'" (Lefevere 1977:1). Nevertheless, it is possible, occasionally, to speak of the 'beginnings' of a tradition. For a tradition is simply that which is "handed down: a . . . practice [perhaps] transmitted from generation to generation . . . a long established and generally accepted custom" (*OED*); somewhere along the line, someone or something must have started a practice going, which, through acceptance and perpetuation would eventually attain the stature of a tradition. And if the practice-turned-tradition was begun in a not too distant nor hazy past, it might be possible to trace the origin of that practice--as seems to be the case with what will be known here as the "tradition" of translating Malay verse into English.

The term tradition is used with reservations here, for although the practice has survived for a period of over a hundred years, as traditions go it has not progressed much beyond the initial stage, nor is it likely to develop along lines usually followed by traditions (as described in Lefevere 1977). Its retarded and somewhat unnatural growth might perhaps be better understood by studying the circumstances surrounding its birth. Like a child conceived of some chance encounter, it is a stranger to one parent, an embarrassment to the other, and unacceptable to both. For despite its origins (paternity?), it is not part of the English translation tradition; nor can it be included comfortably in whatever there is of the Malay translation tradition. But, like the illegitimate offspring, with or without parental acknowledgement or acceptance, it exists and may yet find a

niche in an expanding universe.

That the Malayo-English tradition (in general) would find it impossible to be part of the parent traditions could be seen from the following considerations. The two main sources for European translation traditions have been: the Bible and the Classics (as discussed in Prawer 1973:74 and most books on the subject). Translation of these two sources virtually shaped Anglo-European translation traditions and defined the main task for translation: that of enriching the receiving culture. Within the context of this role of the translated text, translation from sources other than the two mentioned can still happen, but usually only where the source and receiving cultures are perceived as equals: the translation of Malay verse (of the relatively inferior culture) into English (of the relatively superior culture) by a native of the receiving culture would thus seem an absurd anomaly, while translation by a native of the source culture, would be a presumption if not a travesty. The belief that the language of translation should be the translator's own first language is so firmly entrenched in established traditions that to reverse the condition would be deemed to "offend one of the principal canons of translation" (Mukherjee 1981:16). The same argument applies when the practice of translating Malay verse into English is considered in the Malay context.

It would appear then that translation of Malay works, in general, into English, needs to be considered as a separate entity. That it is an anomaly makes it an attractive subject for scrutiny. For perhaps, like the anomalies of science it (and others like it) might shed more light on the process of translation itself. It certainly provides new "intentions for translating" and might perhaps bear out more forcibly Bodmer's assertion that because of the varied intentions of

translators, "the world of necessity [must] be full of an innumerable amount and many varieties of translations" (Lefevere 1977:21).

Perhaps too, anomalies such as the tradition of translating Malay (and other Third World) verse into English might provide a "degree of heterogeneity in outward experiences" without which, according to Spencer, it is impossible to conceptualise (as reported in James, undated:174). And perhaps a degree of neutrality, too, for, as mentioned above, and as discussed in most books on Anglo-European translation traditions, the translation of the Bible and the Classics represents 'ideal types' of two modes, which when taken to extremes become the polarised modes that have so divided expert opinion on the matter (Prawer 1973:74) and rendered discussions on translation evaluation highly emotive.

Unlike the tradition of translating Malay verse into English, the tradition of translating foreign literature across language and cultural barriers into Malay itself is of untraceable origin. South East Asia being one of the oldest inhabited areas of the world with roots going back into prehistory, and the Malay peninsula being well-placed geographically, meant that, from time immemorial, Malaya was a natural meeting place for the sea-faring traders of East, South-East and West Asia (Unstead 1983). History has it that even the Romans, who had sailed from Egypt looking for China, stopped by, a fact made known to the western world in A.D. 150 by Claudius Ptolemy, the Greek geographer, astronomer and mathematician. Roman sailors spoke of visiting two ports in the Malay peninsula, which, because of its wealth of minerals, was described as *Aurea Chersonesus* or Peninsula of Gold (Sheppard in Bradley 1961:266) or "The Golden Chersonese" (Barr 1977; Miller 1965:24). Glass beads of Roman origin were found near Kota

Tinggi, in eastern Johore.[1]

That language and cultural interplay had taken place could be gathered from a study of the Malay language and folklore. According to Ismail Hussein (Ismail in the bibliography, 1974:20), because of the location of its base, Malay became something of a no man's language, a language serving everybody and belonging to nobody, which for centuries had been used equally efficiently as a medium of communication for some 250 mutually unintelligible languages.[2] The function of the Malay language of old seems to be strikingly similar to that of the English language of today.

The Malay vocabulary is rich with words borrowed with or without adaptation from neighbours in the surrounding region, from Sanskrit, Arabic, Tamil, Chinese, Portuguese, and relatively recently from Dutch and English, suggesting that perhaps, like users of the English language who have adopted many thousands of words and expressions from many languages over the past millenium, users of the Malay language were also "keenly alive to what [was] going on in the world and eager to keep pace with cultural developments elsewhere" (Quirk 1975:36). Sir Richard Winstedt (1969a) claims that although the Malay language of prehistoric times was developed to the extent of allowing extremely precise descriptions of everyday experience,[3] it was lacking in abstract terms to express emotions, and ethical, religious and other abstract ideas.[4] Although debatable, such observations would be consistent with the fact that being stoical by nature, traditional Malays would have been averse to vocalizing their emotions, even though they had the linguistic means to do so.

Like Old English, Malay was enriched by the introduction of religious influence and conquest. The coming of Christianity in A.D. 597 to England meant a change of religion, and along with it, different new ideas and outlook. New words came from the Latin, and through Latin, from the Greek (Albert 1961:6-12). The Malay language was exposed to two such influences--first the Sanskrit, through Hinduism, then the Arabic and Persian, through Islam. Old English was further modified by Norman French, and then again, by Renaissance Latin, whilst Malay was modified by Portuguese, Dutch and English.

Of the influence on literature, Winstedt in his Preface notes that, "Any one who surveys the field of Malay literature will be struck by the amazing abundance of foreign flora and the rarity of indigenous growth." Whether this is indeed so is debatable (Ismail 1974:13), but what it does show is the existence of an ancient tradition of translation. Winstedt observes that, like the Elizabethans, the Malay villager was not content with his own 'native wood-notes wild', and welcomed a Renaissance that came through India from Persia and the Arab land in much the same fashion as the former welcomed a Renaissance that came through Italy from Greece and Rome (Winstedt 1969:184). The legend of Alexander the Great, the Persian romance of Amir Hamzah, Bidpai's Fables, the mystical works of Ghazali and Ibn 'Arabi, and many other Oriental classics were translated into Malay.

Compared to the above activities, translation of Malay literature into a foreign language took place relatively recently. In fact, it was more than three centuries after European arrival in the region that this activity was begun. In a well-documented account of the study of traditional Malay literature, Ismail (1974:3) notes that the Portuguese and the Spanish, though earliest to colonise

areas of the region, showed no interest in the study of indigenous culture and literature.

The Portuguese conquered Malacca in 1511 and the Spanish first reached the East Indian archipelago which they were later to colonize, in 1521 (Lightfoot 1973:55-56). This first expedition was headed by Magellan and reached the Indies from the East. Several squadrons were then despatched in 1525, 1526, 1527 and 1542, but all failed in their attempt to gain a foothold in the archipelago. The 1542 expedition, however, continued its explorations through to 1549, and was commanded in its first years by Villalobos, who gave the name 'Felipina' to a single island of the archipelago, in honour of the Spanish crown prince, who later became Philip II. The first Spanish settlement was built in 1565: this was followed by over three hundred years of Spanish colonization of the chain of islands which subsequently became known as the Philippines.

A search of the libraries and museums of the Iberian peninsula unearthed only one Malay manuscript from the Portugo-Spanish period (early 16th to mid-17th centuries), a period when Malay culture was supposed to be at the peak of its bloom (Ismail 1974). This is to be expected, as the Iberians, who were missionaries, colonisers and conquerors, were more inclined to force their own creed and institutions upon their subjects. Fired with proselytic zeal, they "sought to win souls for the Catholic faith" and operated with a fanaticism and ruthlessness which provoked St. Francis Xavier into remarking that in Southeast Asia the Portuguese had learned to conjugate the verb to rape in all its tenses. Islam, the religion of the natives, was deemed "an unclean thing to be stamped out at all costs" (Allen 1968:20-21; Wilkinson 1908:44-45).

Early Dutch and English comers to the area had no such proselytizing fire. They were prepared to be friends and allies of any power so long as this served their interests; but they were traders first and foremost and showed only slightly more interest in the local literature, and that only of a passively acquisitive nature. Malay manuscripts (the most notable of which are the half dozen or so now kept in the Bodleian Library) were brought back to Holland and England early in the 17th century, and that seemed to be as far as it went (Allen 1968; Ismail 1974; Wilkinson 1908; Winstedt 1969a).

This general lack of interest towards indigenous cultures could be attributed not only to an all-consuming interest in commercial enterprises, or to typical imperialist hauteur towards the culture of the colonised, but also (and more so) to an extension of the mood prevalent in Europe at the time. In Europe, veneration of Greek and Latin as the purest and noblest languages not only of Europe, but of the world, led to a general neglect of provincial and vernacular languages and cultures almost right up to the last quarter of the 18th century.

Towards the end of the 17th century, however, long-held beliefs in traditional tenets began to be shaken. Ancient theories in the field of science began to crumble. Newton's discovery of earth's gravity, of the properties of light and of the laws of the tides (1665-1669), for example, revolutionised the theories of physics. The acceptance of such discoveries paved the way for the acceptance of other discoveries, for as Louis Pasteur is quoted to have said, "in the field of Science chance only favours the mind that is prepared" (Truax 1947:5).

It was by chance that Professor Celsius of Uppsala University, in 1729, came upon a student carefully examining some flowers in the neglected botanical

gardens. This intrigued the professor, for few scholars in those days looked to nature to find out about a plant or animal; they looked instead in a book, [sic] "preferably one written by a Greek two thousand years before" (Peattie, undated:327). Surprised and impressed by the young man's astonishing knowledge of botany, the professor invited him home, clothed him, fed him and let him have the run of his library.

The student was Carolus Linnæus, only twenty one at the time and already in possession of knowledge that was to open a new era in science. The professor's generous impulse was rewarded with the present of *Floral Nuptials*, something written by the boy of twenty-one, after a long and close study of nature. In it Linnæus revealed the function of the reproductory organs in plants.

His method of studying and of classifying flora opened up the Linnæan Age, "a flowering of discovery and understanding" (Peattie undated:328). Linnæus it was who discovered the sexual nature of plants, extending further the frontiers of science. His system of classification was devised to work for the flora of any spot in the world, and Goethe was to find it a source of delight (Peattie undated:330) and/or (?) distress (Herford 1913:81).

Linnæus' fame quickly spread and admirers from the far reaches of the world sent him flora and fauna. As described by Peattie:

In his herbarium Linnæus probed the secrets of flowers that bloomed in far-away places. For he was writing a book that would describe all plants and animals then known in the world. Like Adam in the Garden of Eden, he had first go at naming scientifically everything alive, the flowers of the field, the fowls of the air, the beasts of the wood.

The binomial (two-name) device he invented is simple. All roses, for example, are *Rosa*- the sisters being *Rosa gallica* (the French rose) or *Rosa odorata* (the fragrant tea rose) and so on. (Peattie undated:331)



Linnæus named everything right up to *Homo Sapiens*, establishing orderly groups and subgroups. Perceiving how each living thing was related to the next, he revealed the noble and beautiful order that he perceived in nature. It was not without justification therefore that Edward Said was to conclude later that *classification* was one of the four elements on whose presence the specific intellectual and institutional structures of modern Orientalism depend, the other three being *expansion*, *historical confrontation* and *sympathy* (Said 1978:119-120).

Preoccupation with what were deemed the purest vehicles of human civilisation finally ended towards the last quarter of the 18th century, when Europe was swept up by the Romantic Mood (1770-1848). Interest shifted to national/vernacular cultures, which, having developed outside the classical languages, were hitherto neglected (Ismail 1974; Prawer 1973).

In Europe, the spirit of the times was manifest in, among others, the Grimm brothers, who revealed to an astonished Europe the wealth of culture present in neglected German vernaculars. The spread of the mood to the rest of the world resulted in a feverish search for the new, the unknown and the exotic, which activity lasted for almost a century. Europe of the Romantic period was a collecting centre for knowledge from all over the world.

The extension of the Romantic mood in Asia saw the founding of several "amateur learned societies" such as the Batavia Society in Java in 1778 (Parry 1974:416),[5] and the more fruitful and widely known Asiatic Society in India in 1784. The society, later known as the Asiatic Society of Bengal, was formed by Sir William Jones, the Chief Justice of India. The driving force behind the move was Sir Warren Hastings, who, besides being a talented administrator, was

interested in the study of all sorts of sciences. "He was competent in Persian, Bengali, and other native languages[,] . . . a student of natural history, of geography and art[,] . . . a patron of the study of native law. He was always trying to understand the native culture" (Ismail 1974:5; see also Said 1978:78). Members of the society, besides discharging their duties as civil servants, became dedicated collectors of the remarkable wealth that nature, society and culture had to offer.

The study of Sanskrit and Indian culture became the focus of interest for this, the foundation branch of the Asiatic Society. Lawyers, doctors, officers and staff of the civil service devoted their free time to the study. William Jones, a lawyer, Colebrooke (who laid the foundation of Sanskrit Philology), an administrator, and Wilkins, a writer (clerk) in the East India Company's civil service, were amongst the more prominent members of the group of scholar-diplomats which came up with the astounding discovery that Sanskrit, the language inherited by the colonised people was "more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a strong affinity" (Said 1978:79; see also Ismail 1974:6).

The pronouncement, made by Sir William Jones, shocked Europe of the Romantic period out of the deeply-ingrained belief in the <sup>superiority of</sup> supremacy of Greek and Latin over all other languages. French and German Romanticists shared a vision of Europe regenerated by Asia. Friedrich Schlegel and Novalis, for example, impressed upon their countrymen, and Europeans in general, the need for a detailed study of India. Indian culture and religion could defeat the materialism of Occidental culture, they argued persuasively (Said 1978:115), and sparked off

an age of Indo-Germanic comparative and historical linguistics.

The activities of Jones and his generation of scholar-diplomats, or orientalists (?) were to have far-reaching effects on Oriental (and along with it, Malay) cultural and literary studies. The concept and terminologies of Orientalism are applied here with caution; just how difficult it is for an occidental (oriental) to sound objective when discussing cultural encounters with the Other, especially encounters in the colonial period, is fully appreciated. Discussions involving the terms orientalism and orientalist are made more complex by the publication of the book *Orientalism* by Edward Said (1978).

Orientalism means "several things" to Said, all of which, in his opinion, are interdependent. That the term has undergone a dramatic process of connotation, i.e., of imposition of secondary, or additional, meanings onto the original, or primary, meaning (Barthes 1977:20), becomes obvious when the Saidian meanings for the term are compared with, for example, those given in the *OED* and *CCD*. The meaning given in each dictionary, which naturally is the most available, tallies with the most acceptable designation for Orientalism (Said 1978:2). Because the resulting ambiguity (multiplicity of meanings) might give rise to profound misunderstandings (Upton 1961:41), and because the label still serves in a number of academic institutions, this study would attempt to distinguish term/s bearing the original or primary (in the sense of coming into being first) meaning from those bearing other, secondary meanings as incorporated in the Saidian use of the term/s. The original designation for Orientalism, which is an academic one, is as follows:

Anyone who teaches, writes about, or researches the Orient--and this applies whether the person is an anthropologist, sociologist, historian, or

philologist--either in its specific or its general aspects, is an Orientalist, and what he or she does is Orientalism. (Said 1978:2)

This compares with the dictionary definitions for the term/s, an orientalist being "one versed in oriental languages and literature" (*OED*), and Orientalism being "knowledge of and devotion to the Orient" (*CCD*).

A more general and less obvious meaning which the term Orientalism has acquired with and since the growth of the related academic tradition is given by Said (1978:2) as "a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident'". So subtle and pervasive seems to be the effect of Orientalism in this sense that according to Said:

a very large mass of writers, among whom are poets, novelists, philosophers, political theorists, economists, and imperial administrators, have accepted the basic distinction between East and West as the starting point for elaborate theories, epics, novels, social descriptions, and political accounts concerning the Orient, its people, customs, "mind," destiny, and so on. *This* Orientalism can accommodate Aeschylus, say, and Victor Hugo, Dante and Karl Marx. (Said 1978:2)

As Said points out, "the interchange between the academic and more or less imaginative meanings of Orientalism is a constant one," and since the late eighteenth century (about the time when the Straits Settlements were established), "there has been a considerable, quite disciplined--perhaps even regulated--traffic between the two" (Said 1978:3).

The third meaning to be included in the Saidian term (which will be recognized henceforth as *S-Orientalism* to distinguish it from the primary notion by itself) "is something more historically and materially defined than the other two" and is explained thus:

Taking the late eighteenth century as a very roughly defined starting point Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the orient--dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient. . . . [W]ithout examining Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage--and even produce--the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period. . . . [S]o authoritative a position did Orientalism have that . . . no one writing, thinking, or acting on the Orient could do so without taking account of the limitations on thought and action imposed by Orientalism. In brief, because of Orientalism the Orient was not (and is not) a free subject of thought or action. This is not to say that Orientalism unilaterally determines what can be said about the Orient, but that it is the whole network of interests inevitably brought to bear on (and therefore always involved in) any occasion when that peculiar entity "the Orient" is in question. (Said 1978:3)

Said's book seeks to demonstrate how all this happens. It also tries to show that European culture gains in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self.

Said's concept of Orientalism, or S-Orientalism, should be approached with caution, for as Said himself warns, "the answer to Orientalism is not Occidentalism," and "systems of thought like Orientalism, discourses of power, ideological fictions--mind-forg'd manacles--are all too easily made, applied and guarded".[6]

S-Orientalism is not assumed to apply generally or without exception. It is used here only when it is realized that in some cases, all things considered, mainly through the concept of S-Orientalism could interest in relatively so insignificant an area such as Malay literature "such as it is" (Makepeace 1917), at so unpropitious a time, be accounted for.

The "Asiatick Society" of Bengal was founded in 1784, when Europe was in the thrall of Romanticism; the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland was founded in London in 1823 by Thomas Henry Colebrooke, the administrator who was president of the Asiatic Society of Bengal 1806-16. The Bombay Asiatic Society was founded in 1827, the Ceylon in 1845 (towards the end of the Romantic Period, which spanned the interval from around 1770-1848), the China Branch in 1858 and the Japan Branch in 1872. The Straits Branch was founded in 1877 (Makepeace 1917).

The interest in Chinese and Japanese language and literature is understandable as they are products of ancient, major civilizations and cultures; the interest in all things Malay to a Europe no longer bewitched by Romantic visions of the Orient is less easily understood. The point is laboured here, as it is firmly believed that the reason for translating (the why-factor) is significant in determining the choice of mode of translation (the how-factor), just as the complex attitude-factor (which is compounded of the who-, why-, what-, when- and where- factors as well as geo-sociological elements) is important in determining the actual translation process.

Culture conditions the colours we see (Eco 1985:157-175), and perceptions change according to the arrangement/composition of colours, and so it is essential that any discussion of culture-bound processes such as translation takes into account the biases and prejudices that might have affected such processes. Harsh and cynical though it sounds, S-Orientalism does give plausible (albeit unpalatable) alternative--and in many cases, valid--explanations for the activities of the Straits Branch of the Asiatic Society.

More than this, S-Orientalism is highlighted in this introduction to serve as "a reminder of the seductive degradation of knowledge, of any knowledge, anywhere, at any time" and of how easy it is to allow "racial, ideological, and imperialist" stereotyping to cloud issues, whichever the standpoint taken (Said 1978:328).

Orientalism as a "created body of theory and practice in which . . . there has been considerable material investment" which therefore ensured "continued investment," which in turn "made Orientalism, as a system of knowledge about the Orient, an accepted grid for filtering through the Orient into Western consciousness" would explain the fascination of something relatively trivial like Malay culture for a Europe which was reacting against Romanticism. Orientalism as "an elaboration not only of a basic geographical distinction . . . but also a whole series of 'interests' which by such means as scholarly discovery . . . landscape and sociological description, it not only creates but also maintains" (Said 1978:12) would partially explain the sustained interest in Malay language, literature and culture, despite the disdain often displayed.

The upshot of all this is that what Warren Hastings started in India in the age of Romanticism, Stamford Raffles continued in the Malay Archipelago with such impetus as to carry it through to the age of Realism. Charles Wilkins, the East India Company civil servant who, in 1875, published the first English translation of the *Bhagavad-gita*, provided a more direct link with the civil servants of the Straits Settlements. Dubbed the "Sanskrit-mad-gentleman", he was friend and later father-in-law to William Marsden, whose own interest was Malay language and history. Marsden wrote a book on Malay grammar (1812) and

earlier published his *History of Sumatra* (1810), on which Raffles was to model his *History of Java* (1817). Both Wilkins and Marsden seemed to have had direct links with Raffles.[7]

In the study of the tradition of translating Malay verse into English, the Malayan Branch of this society is of particular interest: traditions follow a certain pattern (Lefevere 1977:1), and each tradition has its *precursors*. Precursors of the tradition of translating Malay verse into English seemed to have emerged almost exclusively from the ranks of the members of this branch of the Asiatic Society.

### 1.1 THE SETTING

The translation of Malay works into English, like British expansion in the region (Allen 1968), was dictated less by particular occurrences or persons than by a whole series of events. Although one man, Raffles, is popularly said to have brought the Empire to the East Indies, British dominion of the Malay States was affected by happenings elsewhere. Likewise with the translation of Malay works into English; although the actual practice was started by individuals, the tradition owes its birth to reasons more complex than mere whims and fancies. Just as C. Northcote Parkinson (1960) claims that any story of British expansion in Malaya must have for its background the story of Empire as a whole, it is claimed here that the story of the birth of the tradition has for its setting not only the incidence of imperial expansion--for the precursors of the tradition were almost exclusively officers of the Colonial Civil Service--but also the whole complexity of Victorian traditions, attitudes, values and practices. Only from such a view would there emerge a vast pattern in which the Malay States (and events therein) would fit.



According to Parkinson, the expansion of political dominion conforms to "a pattern of conquest" in which any idea of accident or inconsequence would be destroyed by "a mere recital of chronological sequence". A similar chronological check with regards to European interest in the region would suggest that whilst the activities of Marsden (1812), Raffles (1805-1820s) and Newbold (1830s) might have been manifestations of the Romantic Mood prevalent in Europe then, the practice that launched the tradition seemed to have been influenced by events as remotely connected as the Indian Mutiny and the public school reforms effected by Dr. Thomas Arnold.

Although the story of Empire has been much recorded, whether by apologists, advocates, or critics, it is nevertheless necessary to highlight here such aspects as might enable a better understanding of the setting for the birth of the tradition. For example, whilst it is true that the pattern of expansion is indubitably one of conquest, "there being a point beyond which mere coincidence cannot be made to go", according to Parkinson, to the man on the spot:

events seem genuinely accidental . . . A governor exceeds his authority, there is some delay over reproving him, an unpopular decree coincides with a religious festival, a crowd is collected and excitement mounts, the troops are called out but the commandant is ill, a junior officer panics, a volley is fired, the innocent are killed, the situation becomes critical, more troops are sent for, and the whole territory is annexed. . . . With only a small change in circumstance the whole course of events might have been different . . . (Parkinson 1960:xv)

This "sense of coincidence" would of course be lost on a larger map, where all details should be omitted. What would be seen on such a map would be "footprints of a steady and inexorable advance" with accident merely deciding the hour and place of the inevitable (Parkinson 1960:xv). It would be so easy then, Parkinson warns, to be misled by appearances, to imagine, as Parkinson puts

it, "a conclave of imperialist warmongers, huddled round a map and deciding what part of it should next be painted red". But, Parkinson claims, no such long-term imperialist plan was ever made in Britain:

at least [not] by those in a position to carry it out. That is not how things are done. The decision to advance or stand fast . . . is influenced by many things insignificant in themselves. A Colonial Office official is seen to lunch with his friend in the Foreign Office. A letter is written to *The Times*. A retired governor is invited somewhere for the week-end. Certain shares rise or fall. A banker is seen to look grave and an admiral shakes his head. The trend of opinion is suddenly obvious and the Cabinet decision is rarely opposed to it. In the long run it is the trend of opinion which decides the matter, or else it is the trend of events which decides the opinion. The general tendency matters more than governments or individual statesmen. It is by no means easy to oppose. (Parkinson 1960:xvi)

The overall map is not without its uses. When placed on such a map, William R. Roff's summing up of the reasons for direct British intervention in the affairs of the Western Malay States,[8] for example, brings into the picture factors which might have affected the change in attitude in London but which seemed to have been ignored by most writers on the subject of British intervention in the Malay States, factors such as the economic situation in Britain.

From about 1850 Britain was the leading manufacturing country in the world; but in 1872 the industrial boom caused the overproduction of manufactured iron which led to the economic slump in 1873. Fresh markets for the goods were therefore needed, urgently enough to overcome whatever lingering reluctance there might have been over territorial expansion. Amabel Williams-Ellis (undated:86) noted that from 1870s to 1900, four million seven hundred thousand square miles were added to the Empire.

Though hardly surprising it is significant then that, as noted by W. W. Rostow (1961), in the purchase of manufactured iron (railroad, bar, angle, bolt and

rod), a remarkable shift occurred in which the colonies, South America and other semi-developed areas superseded Germany, France, Belgium and the rest of Europe put together. As well as creating the need for new markets, the "Great Depression" of 1873 revealed the need for new industries. New discoveries in science and new ways of manufacturing or transporting things that followed on these discoveries, as noted by Williams-Ellis, meant that:

many new materials were wanted . . . [most] of [which] were found . . . in tropical countries. . . . Metals that had been only curiosities in scientists' laboratories were now wanted by the ton as alloys. The art of tinning or "canning" [food] had been discovered . . . (Williams-Ellis undated:82)

Tin, thus, became a desirable commodity, and because the South American sources were out of bounds to Britain (the United States being very firm about keeping South and Central America as her own "spheres of influence"), it was natural that the Malay States, the other rich source of tin, suddenly became highly desirable territories for dominion.

Fear of being cut out by other, equally covetous European powers spurred the British into action. As noted in Miller, Lord Kimberley, the Secretary for the Colonies, reported to Gladstone that condition in the Malay States, although becoming "very serious" might go on without very serious consequences except the stoppage of trade:

were it not that European and Chinese capitalists, stimulated by the great riches in tin mines which exist in some of the Malay States, are suggesting to the native Princes that they should seek the aid of Europeans to enable them to put down the disorders which prevail. . . . (Miller 1965:120)

The lever with which Britain could exert influence in Perak, one of the states, was provided by Chinese workers in the province's tin-mines. The Chinese, who first migrated from China to Singapore, where they became British

subjects, considered they had good claim to British protection. They had on their side the first Governor of the colony of the Straits Settlements, Colonel Sir Harry Ord of the Corps of Royal Engineers, who was himself in favour of a forward policy and of intervention in the Malay States. Miller (1965:101) recorded that in March 1873 Ord received a petition from about 250 Chinese merchants and traders in the Straits Settlements asking the British Government to restore order in the Malay States, pointing out that "the richest parts of the peninsula were in the hands of the lawless and the turbulent".[9]

A sense of "history repeating itself" is felt here, when the history of the conquered is compared to that of the conqueror, for, as Williams-Ellis notes:

Roman traders [who] did good business with the Britons . . . came chiefly because they wanted lead (for water-pipes) and iron . . . But there were no roads to many of the best lead-mines, and the British tribes were always fighting one another. So . . . Julius Caesar decided to . . . conquer the wild Britons . . . (Williams-Ellis undated:9-10)

Comparisons between Britain and Rome, though not quite in the above context perhaps, were commonplace throughout the late Victorian period. The men of the Imperial Civil Service were especially aware of the parallels between the two empires. In his analysis of *The Mystique Of Empire*, John Gross (in Field 1972:906) remarked that the men, vanguards of the imperial ethic:

presented themselves as "pro-consuls",--guardians of a sacred trust, master-builders of civilisation. The word "pro-consul" reinforced the echoes of Roman grandeur that were meant to be stirred by the official language of imperialism. (Gross 1972:906)

According to most reports, the men who actually ran the Empire, some of whom were to become the precursors of the tradition, had "a lofty sense of their own calling" (Gross 1972:899). "The Study Of Patriotism", for example, leads Gross to make the observation:

outside pressures and the lofty ideals of the [Civil Service] had only a marginal influence on popular attitudes. . . . The imperial mystique was kept going by its own momentum. Education, propaganda and popular culture drummed in the message, colouring attitudes and ensuring the right responses. (Gross 1972:906)

The search for possible reasons of the birth of an anomalous tradition inevitably leads to a study of British annexation of the Malay States. That it must be so, would, hopefully, become apparent duly. Research reveals that the birth of the tradition is affected by a series of events, some seemingly unconnected, others seemingly trivial.

One such event was the Indian Mutiny of 1857. In Britain, the Mutiny did more than produce a wave of hysteria and a desire for vengeance: it convinced the politicians that the British Crown must assume full responsibility for the government of India from the East India Company. This was done by Royal Proclamation on November 1858. In India, one of the first problems to be tackled was the reorganization of the armed forces. Shocked by, and resentful of what they perceived to be a betrayal of trust, the British completely reorganized the armed forces so that fire-power was controlled by the white troops: "Never again would an Indian -- Hindu or Muslim -- really be trusted".

Civil reconstruction took longer to carry out. The Indian Civil Service labelled by Gross as the "vanguard of the imperial ethic", took charge of the administration. Here, too, there was discrimination, despite the Queen's proclamation of 1858 which stated that all her subjects should be "impartially admitted to Offices in Our Service" (Edwardes 1972:879). Most of the British in post-Mutiny India accepted such open discrimination without question. For what probably was the first time in their rule, all the British felt an overwhelming sense

of solidarity, of belonging to a caste, "which was (it went without saying) the highest one of all" (Edwardes 1972b:870). Such attitude, according to Edwardes, increased in strength throughout the rest of the 19th century.

A further change saw the reversal of an East India Company policy which now saw the Crown encouraging Europeans to live and work in India. It was thought then, that the larger the European population, the safer would be the regime. Fears of racial and political contamination, together with hatred of the climate and its attendant health hazards created an emotionally charged atmosphere. Hysteria, noted Edwardes (1972:893-896), was never far beneath the surface, and "All that was needed was a catalyst for the fears to come tumbling out". Though the government was to remain a moderating influence, the crude racialism of the British non-official community "was . . . reflected in services newly created after the Mutiny" (Edwardes 1972b:871). One such "newly created" service was the administrative service for the Straits Settlements.

That such events as described above influenced officers serving in the Malay States, can be gathered from references to them which surface from time to time. Sir Peter Benson Maxwell, as reported in Barr (1977), claims that the spectre of the Mutiny made the British over-react to the killing of Birch, the first British Resident in the Malay States. C. O. Blagden, in his Preface to W. W. Skeat's (1900) book,[10] *Malay Magic*, defends the book against possible objections (made on the ground that "these studies deal not with 'facts', but with mere nonsensical fancies and beliefs"), by saying:

the objection appears to me to involve an unwarrantable restriction of the meaning of the word [facts]: a belief which is actually held, even a mere fancy that is entertained in the mind, has a real existence, and is a fact just as much as any other. As a piece of psychology it must always have a

certain interest, and it may on occasions become of enormous practical importance. If, for instance, in 1857 certain persons, whose concern it was, had paid more attention to facts of this kind, possibly the Indian Mutiny could have been prevented, and probably it might have been foreseen, so that precautionary measures could have been taken in time to minimise the extent of the catastrophe. (Blagden in Skeat 1900:viii; emphasis added)

That one officer, at least, had "a lofty sense of [his] own calling" is obvious from these words:

there can be no doubt that an understanding of the ideas and modes of thought of an alien people in a relatively low stage of civilisation facilitates very considerably the task of governing them; and in the Malay Peninsula that task has now devolved mainly upon the Englishmen. (Blagden in Skeat 1900:ix)

The following suggests a hint of S-orientalism:

The folklore of uncivilised races may fairly enough be said to embrace every phase of life . . . Its bulk and relative importance seem to vary inversely with the advance of a race in the progress towards civilisation; and the ideas of savages on these matters appear to constitute in some cases a great and complex system, of which comparatively few traces only are left among the more civilised peoples. The Malay race, while far removed from the savage condition, has not as yet reached a very high stage of civilisation, and still retains relatively large remnants of this primitive order of ideas. (Blagden in Skeat 1900:xi-xii)

The object of the book, according to Blagden is "collection rather than comparison". He notes that:

This process, however, will take several generations to accomplish, and in the meantime it is to be hoped that a complete record will have been made both of what is doomed sooner or later to perish, and of what in all likelihood will survive under the new conditions of our time. (Blagden in Skeat 1900:x,xiv)

With such a setting, it would be easy to see the birth of the tradition in the light presented by Blagden's Preface, i.e., to see it as an S-orientalist anthropological exercise. However, research into the activities of the precursors shows that this would be an unfair generalisation: the translation of Malay verse

into English might be nothing more than an S-orientalist academic exercise to some, but to others, it seems to be an act of love.

The motivation for writing, as implied in Blagden's Preface, is repudiated by R. J. Wilkinson:

There is a great deal of affectation in the narrow view that treats foreign [works] as mere material for science or history. (Wilkinson 1908:11)

The book itself, *Malay Magic*, was one of the texts prescribed for the study of "The Malays" in the Higher Standard Examination in Malay, all of which were later considered "inadequate and somewhat unsuitable" (Wilkinson 1907:iii).

Little was known about the Malay States before 1874, and, according to Miller (1965:88), few Europeans and Chinese cared to know more than that they existed and presented trading potentialities if only the official line could be changed. Frank Athelstane Swettenham, who, as an interpreter, had accompanied Colonel (later Sir) Harry St. George Ord, the first Governor of the Colony of the Straits Settlements on his first investigatory tours of the native states, was appalled at such flagrant lack of interest in the peninsula and wrote that from 1867 to 1874 it was "almost inconceivable how little was actually known of the independent Malay States" (Miller 1965:88). Swettenham, like many others, would all in time be dubbed 'Malay' men, i.e., colonial administrators who were sympathetic to Malays, and it comes as no surprise to note that the precursors came from their rank. The claim that the tradition was born out of love might not be too wild a conjecture, after all.



## 1.2 THE PRECURSORS

Three generations or 'waves' of British administrators governed Malaya from 1875 to 1957, when the country obtained complete independence. The first, from about 1875, were the 'pioneers'. When they retired, after about 1903, the 'consolidators' took their place, "laying down the laws, making roads, building the railways, starting the schools, hospitals, health services and every aspect of government". They, in turn, were followed about a quarter of a century later by the 'polishers', who, as reported by Sjovald Cunyngnam-Brown (a third wave officer), merely added "the final touches to the work that had been so expertly planned and begun" (Cunyngnam-Brown in Allen 1983:14).

A survey of writings in the colonial period shows that most of the studies on the Malays and their culture were carried out by men of the first wave. This is to be expected since it is the pioneers who had the chance to do so (Allen 1968); life was comparatively less hectic, and long periods in lonely, distant outposts led almost inevitably to close identification with the people under their charge (see, for example, Allen 1968, Barr 1977 and Allen 1983).

Although not destined to become as illustrious as John Buchan, Wallace or Kipling, the precursors were part of a versatile tradition (as described by Vansittart):

in which a novelist could become Prime Minister, and his successors publish books on philosophy, translations of Homer, biographies of Pitt, Napoleon, Marlborough . . . could have a variety of experience . . . Saki, a political satirist, foreign correspondent, historian of the Russian Empire, wartime sergeant of infantry; . . . Rider Haggard, colonial administrator, farmer, pioneer of afforestation, political pamphleteer, land reformer, Parliamentary candidate, was also President of the Vegetable, Fur and Feather Society, Vice-President of the Council for Public Morals, co-signatory with Kipling for the Anti-Bolshevik Liberty League, founded by Wickham Steed, editor of *The Times*. (Vansittart in Buchan

1987:Introduction)

The accomplishment of this batch of cadets were so varied, that, in the words of Augustine Birrel:

it is often no easy task to assign him whom we would [study] to his proper station among men; and yet, until this has been done, the guns of our criticism cannot be accurately levelled, and as a consequence the greater part of our fire must remain futile. He, for example, who would essay to take account of [the precursors], must read much else besides [Wallace and Kipling]; he must . . . set himself to acquire some [history, literature] . . . together with a host of other subjects of much apparent irrelevance to a[n administrator's] life. (Birrel 1913:1)

Precursors of the tradition came mostly from the ranks of colonial civil servants who joined the Straits Settlements/Malayan Civil Service *as cadets*. According to most reports, these were recruited straight from public schools. A study of the earliest of the precursors would therefore be a study of the climate of opinions, tempers, tendencies of middle-class, mid-Victorian England. The earliest batch of cadets would have been youths born before or about the time of the Great Exhibition (1851), and nurtured during the era of the Victorian Compromise. W. E. Maxwell, for example, was educated at Repton, went out to Singapore when he was nineteen, qualifying as an advocate to the local Bar in 1867. Swettenham was a cadet who joined the Straits Settlements Civil Service in 1870. According to Barr, "Neither Swettenham nor Maxwell were content to leave things as they found them" (Barr 1977:108), displaying behaviour which is consistent with Dr. Arnold's motto: "My love for any place or person, or institution is exactly the measure of my desire to reform them" (Dr. Thomas Arnold of Rugby, as quoted in Asa Briggs' *Victorian People - A Reassessment Of Persons and Themes 1851-67*, 1987:166).

The difference between settler colonies and the tropical Empire are overt differences. Less obvious, perhaps, are the differences between the various tropical parts of the Empire, and the differences in the reactions of different colonial administrators to their environments, as recorded in books such as *Tales From The Dark Continent* (1979) and *Tales From The South China Seas* (1983). The contrast in attitudes between different generations of administrators in Nigeria, for example, can be gathered from the following: James Robenson, a senior Civil Servant in Sudan, when appointed Governor of Nigeria, found the contrast between the two territories "very striking". Earlier generations of administrators, it seemed, had been 'paternal' in their attitude, and this, it was assumed, delayed the 'Nigerianizing' of the services (Allen 1979:134). Presumably, the succeeding generations would adopt a different attitude, more like the attitude adopted in Sudan.

In the early days of colonisation, though they were conquerors, many of the European men became friendly with the natives. These contacts, according to Bethell (1973:1778), were closest in some, but not in other, parts of the Empire, where, improbable though it seems, Europeans often found much in common with those they were sent to rule. Perhaps it could also be added that such contacts were more probable with some, rather than other, individuals.

Such differences divided the Malayan Civil Service into pro-native (or 'Malay') and pro-immigrant (or 'Chinese') groups, whose differences, in turn, are indelibly imprinted in the chequered topography of the Malayan geographical, socio-economical and political landscapes. The differences are such as to attract writers, of no less stature than W. Somerset Maugham, into writing a whole

series of short stories with a Far Eastern/Malayan setting. Although many claim that the characters portrayed by Maugham are distorted (Allen 1983:166), it is significant that observations made by Maugham in Vol III of *The Complete Short Stories* were liberally quoted (Allen 1983:49, 106, 123, 154), and that enough anecdotes sprinkled the books by Allen to give credence to Cyril Connolly's claim that:

Maugham achieves an unspoken ferocity, a controlled ruthlessness . . . (when h)e tells us--and it had not been said before--exactly what the British in the Far East were like, the judges and planters and civil servants and their womenfolk at home . . . (Connolly 1965:73)

Of course Maugham was the first to admit, in the Preface to the above-mentioned book that:

Most of these stories are on the tragic side. [And] the reader must not suppose that the incidents I have narrated were of common occurrence. The vast majority of these people, government servants, planters and traders, who spent their working lives in Malaya were ordinary people ordinarily satisfied with their station in life. They did the jobs they were paid to do more or less completely. . . . They were good, decent, normal people.

I respect, and even admire, such people, but they are not the sort of people I can write stories about. I write stories about people who have some singularity of character which suggests to me that they may be capable of behaving in such a way as to give me an idea that I can make use of, or about people who by some accident or another, accident of temperament, accident of environment, have been involved in unusual contingencies. But, I repeat, they are the exception. (Maugham 1952:Preface)

It is to be expected that the precursors of traditions, like the characters of fiction and the statements of history, are by nature, singulars (Aristotle).

Allen notes further that the Far East world of Somerset Maugham (and Conrad) was different from that of Africa and India as painted by Edgar Wallace and Rudyard Kipling, respectively:

Here the central theme is no longer that of one supremely successful (in colonial terms) racial minority imposing itself upon a rather unsuccessful (again, in colonial terms) majority--as in Africa and India--but of several races drawn to the same watery crossroads principally by lure of trade; competing as rivals but co-existing more or less as equals.

\*\*\*  
No writer echoes more exactly the cadences of the orient than Conrad the sailor, or write so well about the strange flame of passion for trade that 'seemed to burn like a flame of love on the breasts of Dutch and English adventurers' driving them eastwards generation after generation to the Indies and beyond. But it was Somerset Maugham, using South-East Asia as a backdrop for his suburban melodramas . . . who gave us our public image of the British in the Far East. (Allen 1983:9)

A Maugham short story of particular interest here is "The Outstation", which will be discussed in some detail here. To an innocent reader, it would probably be just a portrayal of a snob (Warburton), an archetypal Imperial Civil Servant endowed with a keen sense of the White Man's Burden of Empire, and of course, the intrinsic awareness of racial superiority that must needs come with it. However, anyone familiar with the history of British expansion into the Malay peninsula could hardly fail to respond to the strident historical notes reverberating through it. The allusion to *Perak* in the first paragraph is a clear indication of intent, for it was in Perak that James Birch, the first British Resident was killed, an event which was to seal the fate of the Malay States.[11]

Comparison with notes from history suggests that through the characters of Warburton and Cooper, Maugham, with clear hindsight and the clinical detachment of the remote observer, sought to explore the relatively bloodless conquest of the Malay States.[12] In retrospect, nowhere else had the British appeared more as intruders "interfering in the affairs of a distant civilisation which had done them no harm," than in the Malay States (Taylor 1973:2714). That this

was felt to be so even by some of 'the men on the spot' (Parkinson) is clearly illustrated by the writings of, for example, Sir Peter Benson Maxwell (see Barr 1977).

The polarity of opinions on the matter of British expansion into the Malay States probably led to different attitudes to the Malays themselves. This contrast in attitude is interesting, and an attempt to understand the underlying reasons might very well provide insight into various psycho-sociological phenomena which had affected the running of this part of the Empire. Maugham illustrated this contrast in one brief but telling dialogue, and succeeded in portraying vividly the probable cause of the initial setback experienced by the British in Perak:

He [Warburton] knew how the work of the station should be done, and during the next few days he kept a suspicious eye on his assistant. He saw very soon that he [Cooper] was painstaking and competent. The only fault he had to find with him was that he was brusque with the natives.

"The Malays are shy and very sensitive," he said to him. "I think you will get much better results if you take care always to be polite, patient and kindly."

Cooper gave a short, grating laugh.

"I was born in Barbados and I was in Africa in the war. I don't think there's much about niggers that I don't know."

"I know nothing," said Mr. Warburton acidly. "But we were not talking of them. We were talking of Malays."

"Aren't they niggers?"

"You are very ignorant," replied Mr. Warburton.

He said no more. (Maugham 1952:1455)

This, in a nutshell, illustrates the varying attitudes towards the Malays. Maugham had perceived (or perhaps concluded from studies made?) that, [13] with the colonial administrators especially, "[attitude, like] prejudice[,] is a state of mind brought about by experience" (Brandreth 1984:11).

It is interesting to note that the precursors, like Warburton, came out to the East directly from Britain. That this is significant could be gathered from the

following observation made by Anthony Richards. Although Richards, who served in the Sarawak Civil Service was referring to European reactions to the ethnic and tribal groups in Sarawak, the reaction would apply universally, and would explain partiality towards one group rather than another. Richards was trying to explain his great affection for the Ibans:

They seemed to attract a lot of European officers, perhaps because they were so open and democratic. They had their leaders but they didn't have a class system. They would acknowledge status but their social behaviour cut right across and that was very impressive. When they came into a room, for instance, there was no question of bowing or anything like that. They strode in . . . usually with a hand outstretched as one gentleman to another. Some . . . got on your nerves sometimes, but I found that having first associated with the Iban I stuck to the Iban, while other officers whose first contact was in the Baram river with the Kayans couldn't see anything in the Ibans at all. So we agreed that where your first love is, there you go and stay. You started by trying to get the hang of the Malays, the Chinese, the Ibans and all the rest and then you fell for one or the other. (Richards in Allen 1983:114-115; emphasis added)

Such responses, subjective and open to such "accidents" of temperament, environment, birth, upbringing and training (Maugham) are found to be important in all kinds of socio-cultural encounters, whether it be with people, or with literatures. Disregard or lack of awareness of the sometimes profound effects of such responses on individuals have led to great unhappiness for some (as in the case of Hugh Clifford), and even tragedy (as in the case of James Birch).[14]

Richards' observation, above, shows that it is not improbable that each of the precursors, especially W. E. Maxwell, Hugh Clifford and R. J. Wilkinson, like Warburton in the story, had "conceived a deep love for the Malays. He interested himself in their habits and customs. . . . [H]e admired their virtues" (Maugham 1952:51). Certainly, there could be no doubt about Hugh Clifford's love for the Malays.

Clifford, who seemed to have identified with the Malays in much the same way that T. E. Lawrence identified with the Arabs, was reported to be "bitter and grieved" when in 1903, on Swettenham's retirement, instead of filling the post, he was posted first to Trinidad and Tobago, and then over the next twenty-four years to a variety of far-flung posts--as Governor of the Gold Coast, of Nigeria and later, of Ceylon. He was appointed Governor of the Straits Settlements and High Commissioner of the Malay States, eventually, in 1927; and though the appointment "fulfilled his highest hopes" and gave him "more pleasure than any other, save for that first appointment . . . in Pahang in 1887", his disillusionment that developments of the Malay States had not been as he would have liked for it, made him resign before the end of his term in office. His interest and affection for the Malays and their country remained deep and genuine, for, during his long years of exile, he wrote obsessively of the Malayan life of the late nineteenth century (Barr 1977:147-150, and most books on British expansion in Malaya).

According to Barr, of the early Residents, only Hugh Clifford suggested that the introduction of large-scale plantations would cause social and economic dislocation of closely-knit and effective agricultural patterns such as the British found already in existence in the Malay States. Because he was such a threat to the development of the Malay States, Clifford was posted elsewhere for a long time.

Clifford's probable influence on the other colonial administrators has not been mentioned anywhere, but Maugham might have hinted at it, through the character of Warburton. Warburton's snobbery and fervent desire to be associated



with the aristocracy would have rendered him most impressionable/susceptible to influences of the upper crust. Research on the writings of the precursors suggests that Clifford, through his impeccable, ancient lineage, might have influenced the other officers, even those who were much more senior than him (such as Swettenham), into greater activity than they would have been capable of on their own. Clifford, together with Swettenham, published a Malay-English dictionary in 1895.

Another precursor who might have changed the history of the Malay States had he not been posted elsewhere, is R. J. Wilkinson. It is certainly worth noting that despite Clifford's declarations of love for the Malays and their idyllic way of life,[15] William R. Roff is to write: "Of all the British officers serving in the Malay states, he was perhaps the most sympathetic to and the most understanding of the Malays and the most far-sighted". According to Roff, Wilkinson, in 1902, wrote that:

We are, at best, creating an Asiatic governing class rather than [an] Asiatic [race] capable of self-government. Can such a system be considered natural, and is it the end which its founders had in view? The study of the people themselves will best supply the answer. (Wilkinson as quoted in Roff 1967:28, footnote)

Wilkinson was Inspector of Malay Schools for the Federated Malay States (F.M.S.) from 1903 to 1906. On finding that "Textbooks suitable even for elementary curricula based on reading and writing did not exist", and that "there was a reluctance to use for teaching purposes such Malay material as was available", and "Simple arithmetic was often taught in terms of English Currency and weights and measures" (Roff 1967:28), Wilkinson, in 1906, wrote that:

The whole unreal atmosphere of public instruction in the East is deadening to literary taste. A private enquiry to investigate this point led, some years

ago, to the discovery that very few of the vernacular school teachers had ever read a single work except the school-books and prayer-books that they were actually compelled to study. . . . The destruction of the old Malay literary instinct—even more than the loss of so much of the literature itself—is a painful feature of the change that has come over Malay letters since they have been entrusted to European guidance. (Wilkinson 1906, as quoted in Roff 1967:28)

Like Clifford and Swettenham before him, Wilkinson produced a Malay-English dictionary. Besides that he also published a book on *Malay Literature* (1924).

In his "Report on Malay Studies" (*JSBRAS* No. 83, 1921), Blagden names Wilkinson (who by then was Governor of Sierra Leone) as the man who inspired the setting up of a Committee for Malay Studies in the Federated Malay States in 1906. From the Preface to the *Papers on Malay Subjects*, it is gathered that such a Committee would have been concerned with "The question of how to ensure for the Malays that their customs shall not lack support from the Government" (Wilkinson 1907:iii). The Committee would be of the opinion that:

*it is very desirable that more open recognition should be accorded to Malay sentiment and susceptibility on this subject than is afforded at present. There can be no better way of ensuring this than to cause the rising generation of officers to be instructed in such matters.* (Wilkinson 1907:iv)

To this end, books and methods of study to enable Cadets to become better acquainted with matters affecting Malays were made available. *Papers On Malay Subjects* (1907) were written for this purpose, since earlier books, as mentioned above, have been found "inadequate and somewhat unsuitable". A comment made by Blagden (1921) suggests that although Wilkinson was officially only the editor of the series, the series as a whole reflected Wilkinson's views. According to Blagden:

More than half of these *opuscula* are from the pen of Mr. Wilkinson himself . . . That one should always find oneself in agreement

with every word contained in such an extensive range of monographs, was not to be expected, nor were their authors all equally qualified to do full justice to their subjects. Mr. Wilkinson, in particular, sometimes disposes too hastily of the views of his predecessors . . . (Blagden 1921:31)

Blagden's resentment is understandable, as one of the books found "somewhat unsuitable" was *Malay Magic* (Skeat 1900) for which Blagden wrote the Preface. The Malays--near savages to Blagden--and the reasons for studying them, were viewed differently by Wilkinson:

It is generally admitted that there is no shyer, prouder, more sensitive race than the Malays. They do not lightly accord their confidence to officers whom they do not know, who are moreover actually ignorant of traditions which are a commonplace amongst the people whose interests they try to serve. The Malays are not pushful persons like the Chinese, they are not parasites on the white man like the Indians in these States, so they are apt to go unheard. (Wilkinson, ed., 1907:iv)

Wilkinson seemed to have influenced R. O. Winstedt in much the same way that Clifford influenced Swettenham. According to Mubin Sheppard, Winstedt's growing interest in Malay life and customs was encouraged by a senior Civil Servant, R. J. Wilkinson (Winstedt 1969a:viii, Introduction). They collaborated in the compiling and writing of *Papers On Malay Subjects* and wrote the book *Pantun Melayu* (1957) together. Winstedt, a classics scholar who came to Malaya fresh from Oxford, later published, among a lot of other things, "an excellent grammar of Malay, published in 1913 by the Clarendon Press, an English-Malay dictionary based on Wilkinson's Malay-English dictionary" (Blagden 1921:32), the *History of Classical Malay Literature* (1969a), and *Start From Alif* (1969b), a memoir.

The activities of the Committee for Malay Studies in the Federated Malay States could be said to have sprung into life with the launching of the "Malay Literature Series" in 1906. As of 1921, Blagden reports, fifteen texts have been

issued in the Roman character (Blagden 1921:32). But the activities of the precursors, led by the first of the precursors, W. E. Maxwell, flourished in the *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (JSBRAS)*.

Maxwell was yet another of the precursors who might have changed the history of the Malay States had circumstances not forced him to seek a distant posting. The second son of Sir Peter Benson Maxwell, W. E. Maxwell, whose translating activities launched a tradition, is also a founder member of the Straits Branch Of The Royal Asiatic Society, which was formed on 4th November 1877.

Maxwell will be best remembered for his "genuine respect" for Malay culture (Barr 1977:52). According to Barr, Maxwell:

was generally acknowledged to be the most erudite among his generation of "scholarly administrators". He was an early expert on the lore of the village pawangs (the diviners and medicine men) and on the pithy Malay proverbs. . . .

Maxwell delighted in discovering the similarities between the wise saws of English countryfolk and those which the Malay peasantry expressed in terms of their own rural experience . . . (Barr 1977:58-59)

When he became Assistant Resident of Perak:

he was determined to frame laws that would promote order and efficiency in the country and, at the same time, exist in harmony with native customs. (Barr 1977:52)

It was not surprising then that the code of land regulations he produced in Perak in 1879 appeared to some to have been designed "to prevent the inroads of Chinese immigration into the Malay countryside - that idyllic Malay *kampong*" (as quoted in Barr 1977:53).

Although both Maxwell and Swettenham were 'Malay' men, their approach to land administration differed:

The difference centred on whether or not there was an existing custom of land tenure in Malaya which was part of the Moslem religious code. If so,

this should be taken very much into account in the framing of new land legislation -- which, Maxwell felt, had not happened in Selangor. Swettenham doubted the relevance of even the existence of such an indigenous code. (Barr 1977:108)

But Swettenham, in his own way, loved the Malay people, language, and culture too.[16]

Space allows only three precursors to be discussed in any detail. They were chosen for various reasons. Of course, all were chosen for their 'peculiar' attitude towards Malays (peculiar, that is, from the point of view of Empire), which, no doubt, contributed to their 'exile' from the land they loved; their exile is taken here as a measure of their attachment to all things Malay.[17] Maxwell, being the first of the precursors, naturally deserves special mention, even if his involvement in the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society were not taken into account. Clifford was chosen not only for his love of Malaya and the Malays but more importantly, for the influence he probably exerted over most of the others, especially the 'Warburtons' of the Colonial Civil Service. Wilkinson, it is felt, through the *Papers On Malay Subjects*, had a great deal of influence in shaping the attitude of his fellow officers. All three, of course, must have had immeasurable influence in shaping the attitude of succeeding generations.

A survey of the Journals (*JSBRAS* and *JMBRAS*, the journal for the Malayan branch) yields a list of names which would make interesting further study. Winstedt, Caldecott, Humphreys, Harrison, Hamilton, Swettenham are amongst the more prominent of the precursors. Caldecott and Humphreys, as will be seen in the next section, translated verse forms which are different from those translated by the others. The probable underlying motive for translating might be gathered from Winstedt's reflection on Malays and Malay poetry:

The people who can crystallize passion in such harmonious clipped phrase . . . being, as Tennyson wrote of Burns' songs 'the perfection of the berry,' such a people might have sung songs one would not willingly let die . . . (Winstedt 1957:22; emphasis added)

The role of translation then, is one of preservation, English being the medium, or to use a bio-technical term, the *culture*, in which the Malay characteristics are to be kept alive. To this end, the precursors have tried to *emulate* the original authors, as will be seen in the next section.

### 1.3 THE TEXTS TRANSLATED

Possibly the earliest Malay-into-English translation recorded is the translation of the few Malay words found in *Volume Four* of Richard Hakluyt's *The Principal Navigations Voyages Traffiques & Discoveries of the English Nation*. The voyage, begun by James Lancaster in 1592 was "written from the mouth of Edmund Barker of Ipswich, his lieutenant in the said voyage, by M. Richard Hakluyt" and was the earliest English-Malay contact recorded. It was noted then that:

Pulo in the Malaian tongue signifieth an island . . . [and] they call in their language the Coco Calambe, the Plantane Pison, a Hen Jam, a Fish Iccan, a Hog Babee . . . (Hakluyt 1907:249-253)

The earliest note of Malay literature was made by François Valentijn, a Dutch missionary historian, in the fifth volume of his book *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indien* published in 1726. When describing Malacca he mentioned three Malay literary works that were in his possession (see Ismail 1974). The next and probably the most important record was made ten years later, in 1736, when the Swiss scholar G. H. Werndly published his *Maleische Spraakkunst* or Malay

Grammar. As an appendix to the grammar, Wernsdly put in the *Maleische Boekzaal*, a list of 69 texts which he noted as having been written by the Malays (Winstedt 1920; Ismail 1974).

The earliest translation of Malay verse into English in print is that found in William Marsden's *A Dictionary and Grammar of The Malayan Language*, published in 1812, where fragments of Malay verse were translated and included in the book as samples of Malay prosody. Next to be translated were samples of Malay proverbs, and these appeared in Captain J. W. T. Newbold's *Political and Statistical Account of the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca* (1839). Although neither Marsden nor Newbold could rightly be included among the precursors of the tradition, their efforts had far-reaching effects. Fragments of a Malay verse form, the *pantun*, translated by Marsden, must somehow, as surmised by François-René Daillie in his book *Alam Pantun Melayu* (1988:17-35), have reached the notice of Victor Hugo, and fascinated him enough to have him introduce it into 19th-century French prosody as the *pantoun*. To what degree this verse form affected the literature of 19th-century France is a moot point (see, for example, Daillie's arguments against statements made by C. Holman in his definition of the *pantoun* in *A Handbook To Literature*),[18] but that it made any dint at all is the wonder (Daillie 1988; Holman 1975).

Newbold's efforts were less spectacular by comparison, but were to leave more profound effects. Almost four decades after the publication of his paper, his translations of Malay proverbs so fascinated William Edward Maxwell, as to induce the latter to collect, study and translate into English, not just Malay proverbs but also folklore.

Malay folk tales, being part of an oral tradition, contain a substantial amount of metrical passages. Initial translations of Malay verse were thus purely incidental. At the time of Maxwell's translations (1870s), not much was known about Malay literature--only what was written by earlier colonials. Marsden (as reported in Humphreys 1919), for example, recognized only two forms of Malay verse, the *syair* and the *pantun* (both rhyming), and remarked that rhyme was an essential part of Malay metrical composition, blank verse being unknown to the Malays.

However, as noted by the precursors (Winstedt 1907, and Humphreys 1919 and 1921) Malay prose is interspersed with metrical (sometime rhyming) passages. It is the translation of these passages by Maxwell that launched the tradition. Because they were not recognized as verse forms, these passages were probably not accorded due attention in the translating, for Wilkinson was to remark later that Maxwell's translation<sup>5</sup> of them were "inadequate and disappointing" (Wilkinson 1907:33). Or perhaps, verse translation was not Maxwell's forte: his translation of Malay proverbs received no adverse comments. But, inadequate and disappointing though the translations might be to Wilkinson (whose translation of *pantun* is one of the finest), Maxwell's faithful rendering enabled readers to appreciate the imagery of the original, which, according to Wilkinson, is "intensely real" (Wilkinson 1907).

The activities of the precursors were halted by World War II, but had actually slowed down earlier, in the 1930s, perhaps for the following reasons, i.e.: that by then there was too much administrative work (both in the private and the public sectors) to be done in the fast developing colony; that there was much less



chance for the colonisers to get to know the natives, since the European community has grown rapidly whilst the ratio of native to non-native has shrunk even more rapidly, so that it was only rarely that a European would have native neighbours (Blagden 1921); and that, perhaps, because so much has been done in the past, the compulsion to do more might not have been felt.

All the verse forms translated by the precursors are traditional types, most of which are well-defined, and some, like *pantun* and *syair*, built to a formula. Much influenced by developments in Indonesia, modern Malay verse came into being only after the awakening of Malay nationalism, i.e., during World War II. Modern Indonesian poetry came into being much earlier, in the 1920s, and Indonesian poets, whether directly or indirectly, were involved in the movement towards independence from the Dutch (Umar 1980:3).

### 1.3.1 The *Pantun*

The most popular form to be translated is the *pantun*; it certainly had the earliest exposure. Maxwell, Clifford, Wilkinson, Winstedt, Harrison, Swettenham, Hamilton, all tried translating it. The most concise definition of the *pantun* is the one translated from Denys Lombard's (French) *Encyclopaedia Universalis* by François-René Daillie:

The *pantun* is a short quatrain rhyming ABAB. The idea is expressed in the third and fourth lines, the first two lines containing, on principle, only an allusion, often sibylline, or even sometimes being chosen only for the sake of euphony. . . . (Daillie 1988:22)

Most of the precursors translated by emulating the style of the original, but a few translated differently. Maxwell and Swettenham chose to render the sense, and did not retain the rhyme. Maxwell did not encounter the *pantun* as isolated

poems, but as metrical passages found in the folklore he translated, such as those in the tales of *Sri Rama* (1886, 1910), *Raja Donan* (1886), *Raja Ambon* (1888).

The following are samples of the translation by several of the precursors:

*Berapa tinggi puchok pisang*  
*Tinggi lagi asap api*  
*Berapa tinggi gunung melentang*  
*Tinggi lagi harap kami.* [1.1]

How high soever the shoot of the plantain,  
 Higher yet is the smoke of a fire;  
 High though may be the mountain ranges,  
 Higher still are the hopes I indulge. [1.1a]  
 (Maxwell 1886:106)

*Kalau tuan mudek ka-hulu*  
*Charikan saya dawn kemboja:*  
*Kalau tuan mati dahulu*  
*Nantikan saya di-pintu shurga.* [1.2]

If you must travel far up river  
 Search for me in every village;  
 If you must die while I yet linger,  
 Wait for me at the gate of heaven. [1.2a]  
 (Swettenham in Wilkinson 1907:64)

R. O. Winstedt, A. W. Hamilton and C. W. Harrison retain the rhyme:

*Buah jering di-atas para*  
*Di-ambil budak sambil berlari;*  
*Kering laut tanah Melaka*  
*Baru kita mungkir janji.* [1.3]

The fruit that was atop the shelf  
 A youngster picked and ran away;  
 Never will we break our troth  
 Till the sea run dry in Malacca Bay. [1.3a]  
 (Winstedt in Wilkinson 1907:47)

*Dari mana punai melayang?*  
*Dari paya turun ka-padi:*  
*Dari mana kaseh sayang?*  
*Dari mata turun ka-hati.* [1.4]

Whence doth the pigeon turn his glancing flight?  
 Down to the ricefields from the heaven's height.  
 Whence cometh love and whence may longing start?  
 From the eyes glancing it will reach the heart.  
 (Harrison in Wilkinson 1907:47) [1.4a]

*Orang mengail di lubuk Bulang,  
 Bermain umpamanya? [sic] Kulit duku.  
 Bermain dengan kekasih orang,  
 Nyawa bergantung di hujung kuku.* [1.5]

Those who fish in Bulang's deep,  
 Use duku skins for bait,  
 With another's love a ryst to keep  
 Is risking life upon a thread. [1.5a]  
 (Hamilton as quoted in Dailie 1988:174)

Clifford provides an interesting variation, by using enjambment instead of an end-stopped rhyme:

*Pulau Pinang pekan-nya baharu  
 Kapitan Light menjadi raja  
 Ingat ingat zaman dahulu  
 Dudok berlinang ayer mata.* [1.6]

On the isle of Penang there is 'stablished a city,  
 'Tis a stranger that keepeth her wall;  
 Of the days that are dead thou shalt think not, lest pity  
 Shall bow low thine head while the salt tears fall.  
 (Clifford in Wilkinson 1907:47)[19] [1.6a]

Another translation of the above *pantun* is:

Betel-Nut Isle has a brand new town  
 With Captain Light for a king.  
 Sit not and sigh for days that are gone  
 Lest the tears to your eyelids spring. [1.6b]  
 (Winstedt 1969a:197)

Muhammad (in Asmah 1979:139) finds these translations, especially Hamilton's, "successful", for the translators, according to him, have been able to translate "not only the spirit but also the culture behind the poems".

### 1.3.2 The Syair

The syair (previously spelt *shaer*), or the rhymed chronicles, were collected but not translated. These are very long compositions, like Dante's *Divine Comedy*, but consisting of mono-rhymed (a-a-a-a or b-b-b-b etc.) stanzas of four or six lines.[20] According to Winstedt, these poems, which:

owe a debt to the . . . rhapsodies of Persian mystics[,] . . . struck a new note in Malay poetry[;] . . . [some] are sensuous and passionate . . . (Winstedt 1969a:190-191)

Winstedt translated about three stanzas to illustrate his point:

*Satukan hangat dan dingin,  
Tinggalkan loba dan dingin,  
Hanchor hendak seperti lilin,  
Mangka-nya dapat kerja-mu lichen.* [1.7]

When heat and cold have become the same,  
With greed and desire each an idle name,  
And your self's like wax resolved in the flame,  
Then smooth in the end you'll find life's game. [1.7a]

*Hunuskan pedang, bakarkan sarong,  
Ithbatkan Allah, nafikan patong.  
Laut tauhid yogia kau-harong.  
Di-sana-lah engkau tempa bernaong.* [1.8]

Burn the sheath and draw the blade!  
Be idols abandoned and Allah obeyed!  
In the ocean of God you must plunge and wade,  
For there is your place of protecting shade.  
(Winstedt 1969a:190) [1.8a]

The vignettes, according to Winstedt, are "brilliant", and gives as example:

*Lalu turan [sic] milam balu,  
Buang lambai sambil lalu,  
Angkat tabek teleng ulu,  
Bagai merak kirai bulu.* [1.9]

The widow from Bali came down;  
As she passed, gave a wave to the town;  
Saluting she tilted her crown,  
Like a peacock a-preening its down. [1.9a]

(Winstedt 1969a:191)

The precursors seemed to have made no other attempt to translate *syair*.

H. Overbeck writing on "Shaer Burong Punggok, A Malay Romance", claims that, "'Shaers' have always been the step-children to European students" (Overbeck 1914:190). Wilkinson, for example, as reported in Overbeck, dismisses this verse form as:

a very artificial product . . . intended more as a display of the author's learning than as an outburst of poetic sense; it rarely arouses much enthusiasm amongst the masses of the people. (Wilkinson as quoted in Overbeck 1914:191)

Overbeck, whilst conceding that this might be true of most *syair*, "beg[s] to claim an exception to the rule" for "Shaer Burong Punggok". This *syair*, according to him, belongs to the class described by de Hollander, which:

"In poetical value, . . . stand far above the *pantuns*, and he, who finds beautiful the poems of Homeros, will also read with pleasure the Malay "shaers," as soon as he becomes accustomed to not being put out by the sometimes annoying repetitions. One finds in the "shaers" a childlike naiveté, a simple representation of events and circumstances, a natural expression of feelings and emotions, which has something touching and captivating, and fascinates the reader in spite of the many gaps that occur to him, and of the many words, for the presence of which in their place he will be unable to find any reason, unless he realises that it must be looked for in the compulsion of metre and rhyme." (de Hollander as quoted in Overbeck 1914:191)

Overbeck also finds that the story that this particular *syair* contains "differs entirely from that told by Mr. Skeat" in his *Malay Magic* (Overbeck 1914:190). He finds the story touching and poses the rhetorical question:

may not the story of the love of the poor Punggok and of his sad death after a short happiness, be based upon a simple love-tragedy, that has occurred, and still may occur any day, in Malay kampongs, not of Malaya as we know it, but as Clifford and Swettenham have seen it, and of which now but very little remains, until one comes to the remote places of the Malay Peninsula . . . (Overbeck 1914:191)

Unfortunately Overbeck did not attempt a translation.

### 1.3.3 The Rhythmical Verse

Three types will be distinguished here, according to their function: the descriptive passages found in folk stories, incantations of the Malay *pawang* (medicine man), and the formal rhythmical speeches or the prose poetry of the Minangkabau people of Negri Sembilan. Winstedt makes the following observation:

The poetry of Beowulf is in language abrupt and rudely phrased: its lines, rhythmical but not metrical, are padded with stock tags, which the reciter employed to keep the narrative marching when inspiration or memory flagged. More or less uniform in length, the lines of Old English poetry could rarely be scanned and appear to be based on accents that occur with fair regularity. Anglo-Saxon verse, therefore, was very similar to the rugged rhythmical verse [of the Malays]. (Winstedt 1969a:178)

This form of verse is still alive in the incantations of the the *pawang*, in the legal maxims and the songs of origin of the Minangkabaus (the highland people of West Sumatra), and in rhapsodist tales. According to Winstedt:

Some of these [verses] rise to poetry in their heightened description . . . [and t]hough the rhythm sometimes limps or fails, these [verses] often rank with genuine poetry. (Winstedt 1969a:179-180)

He gives as example, "the magnificent vaunting in a Malay medicine-man's charm for courage":

*Aku besi! Tulang aku tembaga!*  
*Aku bernama harimau Allah!* [1.10]

Of iron am I! My bones of brass!  
My name is the Tiger of God! (Winstedt 1969a:181) [1.10a]

Winstedt observes further that:

Th[e] rhythmical verse reached its heights in lines of realism combined with an Elizabethan exuberance of imagination . . . Whether he is describing a storm or a kitchen, a pattern in silk, a port, or a girl firing a blunderbuss, the Malay rhapsodist has a keen eye for detail.

which is, as it were, fused in the magnificence of the rhodomontade.  
(Winstedt 1969a:182-183)

The precursors were most impressed with a description of early morning, where, apart from the borrowed figure of 'the curtain of the dawn' the effect is gained by an accumulation of familiar detail. Maxwell translated it when he translated the tale of *Sri Rama* (also found in Wilkinson 1907:33); the following is Winstedt's version:

*Tengah malam sudah terlampau,  
Dinihari belum lagi tampak.  
Budak-budak dua kali jaga;  
Orang muda pulang bertandang:  
Orang tua berkaleh tidor;  
Embung jantan rintek-rintek;  
Berbunyi kuang jauh ka-tengah,  
Sering-lanting riang di-rimba,  
Melengoh lembu di-padang,  
Sambut menguk kerbau di-kandang,  
Berkokak mandong, merak mengigal,  
Fajar sadi menyengsang naik;  
Kichak-kichau bunyi murai,  
Taptibau melambong tinggi,  
Menguku balam di-ujung bendul  
Terdengut puyoh panjang bunyi,  
Puntong sa-jengkal tinggal sa-jari:  
Iru-lah 'alamat hari' nak siang.*

[1.11]

Long had passed the hour of midnight;  
Not yet visible the daylight;  
Twice ere now had waking infants  
Risen and sunk again in slumber;  
Truant youths were wending homeward;  
Wrapped in sleep were all the elders;  
Far away were pheasants calling;  
In forest depths the shrill cicada  
Chirped as heavy dew descended;  
Lowled the oxen in the meadows,  
Buffaloes from byres responded;  
Peacocks spread their tails at cock-crow,  
Up rolled the curtain of Aurora;  
Magpie robins 'gan to chirrup,  
Now aloft were nightjars soaring,  
Pigeons cooed upon the threshold

Fitful came the quail's low murmur;  
Foot-long brands had burned to inches--  
These she sings [*sic*] of day approaching.  
(Winstedt 1969a:183-184)

[1.11a]

The ritual speeches of the Minangkabau Malays of Negeri Sembilan fascinated A. Caldecott and J. L. Humphreys. Of the Nening Wedding-Speech, Humphreys notes that:

The homely precepts of the [piece] recall more than one passage in the Second Georgic: among the Nening, as among the Virgilian peasantry are still found

... *patiens operum exiguoque assueta juvenos,*  
*Sacra deum sanctique patres.* (Humphreys 1916:1)

The Wedding-Speech is summed up by Humphreys as follows:

*Our lives are guided by religious laws, and by ancient Menangkabau custom.* (Lines 1-47)  
*I tell of the customs that govern our marriages and the up-bringing and wedding of our children.* (Lines 48-94)  
*Lastly, I tell of the making of this marriage, to fulfil which I am now come.* (Lines 95-131)  
(Humphreys 1916:1)

The following are the first, second and sixth verse, respectively, of the

Nening Wedding-Speech:

*Adalah pebilangan adat,  
Hujan berpohon,  
Kata berpangkal;  
Sakit bermula,  
Mati bersebab;  
Mengaji ka-pada alif,  
Membilang ka-pada esa;  
Pebilangan pada nan tua-tua,  
Perkhabaran pada nan kecil-kecil.*

[1.12]

*Maka ada-lah pebilangan;  
Sa-pertama kala Allah,  
Ka-dua kala Nabi,  
Ka-tiga kala tua,  
Ka-empat resam negeri:  
Hidup berperuntongan,*



*Mati berhukum Allah.*

[1.13]

*Nama mana resam negeri?  
 Shariat palu-memalu,  
 Berbudi orang berbahasa kita:  
 Dunia berganti-ganti,  
 Sa-kali di orang sa-kali di kita.  
 Sembah Dato'!*

[1.14]

Humphreys translates them as follows:

The saying of the custom runs,  
 Rain from a rain-cloud,  
 Speech from a prelude;  
 Sickness from a beginning,  
 Death from a cause:  
 Spell from the letter A,  
 Count from figure 1;  
 The old men know tradition,  
 The young men hear report.

[1.12a]

And there is a saying runs,  
 First the law of God,  
 Second, the law of the Prophet,  
 Third, the law of tradition,  
 Fourth, the custom of the land:  
 Living we work our fate,  
 Dead we abide the doom of God.

[1.13a]

*What is the custom of the land?  
 Duty gives and receives again,  
 Courtesy repays kindness:  
 The hap of this life goes by turns,  
 Awhile to him, anon to me.*

Homage, O Chief!  
 (Humphreys 1916: 26-27)

[1.14a]

Humphreys is fascinated with the Minangkabau ideal of a quick and peaceful settlement by compromise. The ideal is summed up in one of the proverbs found in these ritual pieces:

*Menang berkechundang,  
 Alah berketundukan,  
 Sa-rayo berjabat tangan.*

[1.15]

Victory--a defeated foe;  
 Defeat--a bowed head;  
 Agreement--a joining of hands. [1.15a]

The point is: even successful litigation is unsatisfactory--it leaves an embittered foe. (Humphreys 1921:26)

The *teromba* is another of the Minangkabau ritual recitals in which are preserved legal maxims and proverbs. The following is A. Caldecott's translation of a portion of the *teromba*:

*Malim Kunong Malim Kinang*  
*Singgah di-rumah Bilal Lata:*  
*Makan sireh dengan pinang,*  
*Saya 'nak mulai pangkal kata.* [1.16]

Astrologers and sages twain  
 Are come to Bilal Lata's door.  
 Friends, chew the betel nut, and deign  
 To listen to a tale of yore. [1.16a]

*Anak sembilang di-atas langsung:*  
*Ayer dalam sungai Landai:*  
*Saya membilang mana nang dapat;*  
*Nang tinggal sama di-pakai.* [1.17]

Deep, deep the Landai waters flow!  
 A stinging fish among the fruit!  
 I tell the story that I know,  
 But tales forgotten are not mute. [1.17a]

*Bukan lebah sebarang lebah,*  
*Lebah hinggap dalam chempaka:*  
*Bukan sembah sa-barang sembah,*  
*Sembah saya sembah pesaka.* [1.18]

The bee no bee of common wing--  
 The bee upon the *champak* flower!  
 No common song the song I sing--  
 A song of legendary power. [1.18a]

*Bukan lebah sa-barang lebah,*  
*Lebah hinggap di-hujung akar:*  
*Bukan sembah sa-barang sembah,*  
*Dari hujung sampai ka-pangkal.*  
*Sembah Dato'!* [1.19]

Goodly the bee, of golden wing,  
 Alighting on the flowery sprays!  
 Goodly the ancient song I sing,  
 A bond with bygone yesterdays.

Homage, O Chief!  
 (Caldecott 1891:3-4)

[1.19a]

Of the works translated by the precursors, Wilkinson's and Winstedt's translations of the *pantun* are the best known, and some have made their way into more recent publications (such as *The Penguin Book of Oral Poetry*, compiled by Ruth Finnegan, 1978, Lang's *Guide to Eastern Literatures* 1971 and Daillie's *Alam Pantun Melayu*, 1988). Hamilton's *Malay Pantun* has also been printed several times (first in 1941, then in 1944 in Australia, 1959 in Singapore, then again in 1982). Both Hamilton's and Humphreys' translations appear in the *Anthology of ASEAN Literatures, Malaysia Volume 1* (Hasnah ed., 1985).

#### 1.4 PRECURSORS' ANALYSIS OF TEXT/PROSODY

The precursors' approach to and handling of the texts is exemplary. Their words will be quoted at length here, both to show the amount of study, thought and deliberation that have gone into the translations, and to highlight the parts which might reveal their translation strategy. Wilkinson, for example, is aware that:

We must begin by avoiding the assumption that all races share English ideas regarding assonance, song and metre. If we . . . turn to our own popular notions, we can see that some people identify poetry with rhyme, others with metre, others again with what is called "poetic diction." If we turn to the Greeks, we find that they were indifferent to rhyme and abhorred hiatus. (Wilkinson 1907:43)

Winstedt, the classics scholar from Oxford, makes the following observation and appeal:

In estimating the merits of foreign literatures, we often make no allowance for the conditions under which they exist. We call the *pantun* obscure and the *shaer* long-winded because we do not understand the first and because we are insensible to the associations of the second. A Scotchman, who would accuse a Malay or even a Homeric rhapsodist of fondness for repeating himself, may be thrilled to his very marrow by the sound of "Scots wha hae" or "Auld Lang Syne," even though he hears such tunes for the five-hundredth time. Why need we twit the Asiatic with a similar fondness for what he considers

"Jewels five-words-long  
That on the stretched forefinger of all Time  
Sparkle for ever." (Winstedt 1907:58)

He explains that:

The rhapsodist--the *penglipur lara* or "soother of cares" as he is prettily called--chants his story or poem or romance to a circle of appreciative listeners who do not trouble to enquire whether the plot or the poet is original but who revel in the pleasure afforded them by the sweet voice of the singer, by the references that he continually makes to "the tender grace of the day that is dead," the ideal age, the golden past that can never come back to the Malay except in the dreamy imaginations evoked by melody and song. (Winstedt 1907:59)

Wilkinson discusses the intricacies of the *pantun*, and dismisses some of the misconceptions surrounding this immensely popular verse form:

The true racial verse of the [Malays] is the *pantun*, a poetic form that is quite unique in the literature of the world and deserves the very greatest attention. It is usually described as a quatrain in which the first line rhymes with the third, and the second line rhymes with the fourth--a description which is insufficient rather than incorrect. The peculiarity of the *pantun* lies in the fact that its first pair of lines and its last pair seem to have little or no connection in meaning with each other, so that some people display the most extravagant ingenuity in trying to explain the connection where it seems inexplicable, while others simply dismiss the first pair of lines as mere "mechanical rhymes" intended to "make poetry" with the last pair. This last contemptuous explanation, if correct, would make Malay versification a very simple matter indeed, but it would hardly explain the extraordinary attraction that the *pantun* seems to exercise over all the natives of the Peninsula--Straits-born Chinese and Indians, as well as Malays. It leaves a mystery about this form of poetry--a mystery which gives free scope to the imagination of any European who comes across one of these popular verses, either in the original or in the still more mystifying form of a translation. (Wilkinson 1907:45)

He dwells on its mystique:

Is there really any connection between the two halves of a *pantun*? If there is, what can that connection be? If there is none, what charm do the [Malays] find in so crude a type of poetry? If the first two lines are mere mechanical rhymes, how is it that they often contain references to the half-forgotten legends of centuries ago? On what principle is this mysterious first half of a *pantun* selected or constructed? Such are some of the thoughts that stimulate the interest of the enquirer who dimly sees that the *pantun* has attractive properties which he cannot quite appreciate or understand and which he has to reproduce as best he can with the aid of his imagination. Thus it comes about that translation of isolated specimens of these really untranslatable quatrains has been attempted with varying degrees of ill-success by Europeans of all types, from literary giants like Victor Hugo down to smart up-to-date writers like H. G. Wells . . . (Wilkinson 1907:45-46)

Consistent with the aim of the *Papers on Malay Subjects*, which is to enable newly arrived cadets to know the native through his cultural heritage, Wilkinson patiently tries to explain the literature by drawing parallels:

The European student, who finds the metrical romance or *shaer*, too long-winded for his taste, will probably complain that the extreme brevity of the *pantun* makes it obscure. There are, in English, certain verses that owe their humour to this quality:

Little boy--box of paints,  
Licked his toy--joined the saints.

Yet even the construction of such a verse as the above would be verbose to a Malay who (in his own natural idiom and not for effect) would cut it shorter,

Small boy--box paints,  
Licked toy--joined saints.

This example will have given a fair idea of what one may call the machinery of Malay syntax, but, to get an idea of its real effectiveness, we must instance a passage in which the brevity is not a forced construction intended merely to raise a laugh--

La vie est vaine;  
Un peu d'amour,  
Un peu de haine,  
Et puis--bonjour!

A short phrase rich in its suggestiveness--that is what constitutes, in Malay eyes, another beauty of the *pantun*. To an English reader the quatrains seem overcrowded with meaning; they force him continually to stop and think. But the *pantun* is not intended to be read. Slowly sung, with a long chorus or refrain after each line, it gains merit by occupying the mind during the chorus instead of being dismissed as too transparent in its

meaning. A verse, written to be read and to carry its meaning on its surface, would not stand the test of *pantun*-singing; it would make the chorus intolerably monotonous. This fact again makes it difficult to reproduce the attractiveness of the Malay quatrain through the medium of a foreign language and in the plain black-and-white of a printed page. (Wilkinson 1907:52-53)

Wilkinson's observations are supported by Humphreys, who makes the following observation about the Naning Recital:

There is little doubt that this composition (like the metrical passages in Malay romances . . . ) was originally intended for singing or recitative, with a beat of the drum (*rebana*), as in *pantun* singing, to mark each accented word.

In lines with four beats . . . there is observable a certain superficial resemblance to the four-foot trochaic metre, most familiar in the song of Hiawatha . . . and the resemblance has led translators to adopt this rather monotonous metre for their versions of Malay metrical romances and *Teromba*. It is however, clear that Malay verse is not 'metrical' (in the sense of resolvable into 'feet' that scan), but accentual. As such, it may be compared with an only slightly less primitive form of composition--the old English accented and alliterative verse, such as *Beowulf* . . . or *Piers Plowman*. . . . Apart from the alliterative principles . . . there is a similarity of rhythm in the two forms. Just as the emphatic words in the Malay lines are marked by the beat of the *rebana*, so were the accented and alliterated syllables of the English verses marked by a stroke of the harp. And it may be remarked in passing that although the Malay verse is primarily accentual there are evident traces in it of both the intermediate ornaments between *vers libres* and perfect rhyme, viz. assonance and alliteration. . . . The whole system of Malay prosody--including *pantun* structure--deserves more examination than it has yet received. (Humphreys 1921:28-29)

From the actual recitation Humphreys makes the following analysis:

I noticed in [the] recitation of the verses that the accented syllables were strongly emphasized and that a distinct caesura was made in each line (in the lines containing the second). The effect produced was a rhythmic recitative, slightly reminiscent of an intoned Psalm. In the lines with four beats it was observable that the second and fourth were much more emphatic than the first and third, and in the lines with three beats that the second and third were much more emphatic than the first. Further examination of the verses shows that in each case the most important words in the sentence are so placed that the accentual beat falls inevitably upon them, and they lengthened in pronunciation, or pronounced with greater force, by a natural union of sense and rhythm. (Humphreys 1921:28)

Of the impression the recital left on him, he writes:

It is not easy to find an English parallel to this form of composition, but the 'Song of Origins' recalls at times the tone and mood of an older Oriental poem--the 'historical' Psalm:

"I will open my mouth in a parable: I will declare hard sentences of old;

Which we have heard and known: and such as our fathers have told us . . .

When there were yet but a few of them: and they strangers in the land;

What time as they went from one nation to another: from one kingdom to another people . . .

That their posterity might know it: and the children which were yet unborn."

If we want to feel whether the 'Song of Origins' is good poetry or not we must picture the crowded wedding-feast, and the old man [the Elder of a Clan] reciting the tale of the Custom (with gesture and beat of drum at each cadence of the rhythmical accented verse) to the sons of Menangkabau 'in a strange land': only then can we understand how good the work is, how fitted for its time and place, how full of true pleasure. (Humphreys 1921:3)

Wilkinson makes the following observation on Malay prose-poems, again making comparisons with the Greek [21]:

. . . Asiatics . . . often chant or sing prose as well as poetry. Much Malay prose-literature is in a transition stage: it contains jingling, half-rhyming and even metrical passages: it is written for a singer and not for a reciter or reader. Malay rhapsodists like to keep harping on long resounding syllables, and they follow the primitive conventions of the Homeric age, in that, whenever they get a fine passage or pretty descriptive epithet, they bring it into use as often as they can, for its own sake and without any special reference to the context. . . . In the true song-literature of the Malays--the *pantun* and the prose-poetry of the rhapsodists--comparatively little attention is paid to our canons of prosody . . . (Wilkinson 1907:43-44)

## 1.5 REVIEWAL

The precursors' motive for translating Malay verse into English has been established: to introduce their countrymen to a people and a culture they (the precursors) love, through, amongst other things, its language and literature. They

are aware of the facility of the Malay language, of its receptiveness to new words and new ideas. On comparing, they found that:

'the Malays have been progressing on much the same literary road as ourselves but have not got as far as we have'. And, what is more significant, their tongue will be found to have been one of the cultural languages of the world. (Winstedt 1969a:2)

Their love for the people, language and literature led the precursors to present the people,[22] the language and the literature as something worth knowing. An interesting point to note is that whereas in the history of other regions dictionaries are published as an aid to the translation of the Bible, in Malaya, they were published to enable the British to understand the Malays, their language and their literature.

Toward making Malay literature acceptable, the precursors made comparisons with what their countrymen were familiar with, and found that they were able to draw parallels not only between Malay and Greek prosody and Malay and Old English prosody, but also between some forms of Malay verse and the Psalms. Frequent comparisons were made. In the "Introduction to the Literature" section of *Papers On Malay Subjects*, for example, Wilkinson begins the explanation of the mechanics employed in the art of the rhapsodist in the following manner:

The Malay rhapsodist or romance writer never tries to keep his hearers in suspense. Like the great Greek dramatists he usually deals with legends of which the outlines are known to all; he cannot make his audience wonder how the story will be made to end. He only promises his hearers that he will soothe their troubles and drive away their cares. To bring about this end he uses narrative rather than his plot. Beginning, perhaps, by thrilling his listeners with the account of some Homeric combat . . . (Wilkinson 1907:12-13)

Only after making this comparison with the Greek does he introduce the Malay



features, i.e. when the Malay rhapsodist "suddenly turns aside" to indulge in descriptive passages.

These passages seemed to have impressed the precursors, for some of them have been translated by several individuals (first by Maxwell, usually, who is faithful to the sense, and then by Wilkinson and/or Winstedt each of whom tries to preserve both sense and style). Such passages are frequently used to illustrate the merits of Malay poetry. Attention is drawn to the novelty of the technique:

Thus, for instance, a story-teller describes the many-voiced inquisitiveness of a crowd by simply repeating a series of questions:

Has a fortress fallen?  
Has a dyke been broken?  
Is a fence thrown over?  
Is our hall in ruins?  
Has some pillar yielded?  
Is the roof-tree giving?  
Has the flooring crumbled?  
Is some fleet arriving? {1.20}

The same man depicts an indefinite distance by a succession of simple comparisons that must appeal to the experience of all:

As far as a cannon batters, as far as a bullet flies,  
As far as a horse can gallop, or the flight of a bird  
can rise/  
Or the deeds of a man be witnessed by his  
friends' unaided eyes./  
(Wilkinson 1907:13) {1.21}

These much-admired passages placed the precursors in a quandary. For whilst appreciating that "the one great merit" of traditional Malay poetry is its "intensely real" imagery, they also realize that they:

can hardly do justice to this merit. The English student, having heard of harpies and dragons, can appreciate the force of references to them; but what is he to make of allusions to the racquet-tailed drongo, or to the fan-tailed fly-catcher, or to the crab-eating macaque, or to the slow loris,

or to the relations that exist between the egret and the buffalo and between the sea-eagle and the shell-fish? The best Malay literature is hard to understand and still harder to translate. (Wilkinson 1907:8-9)

Elsewhere, Wilkinson is to moan, "the great fault of his [the Malay's] literature is that it is too national--it is not cosmopolitan enough to please other races" (Wilkinson 1907:14-15). This, of course, is a major problem in translating between two dissimilar cultures with two very different 'world views'.

Other problems which could be gathered from the precursors' writings are due to the linguistic features of Malay. Malay verb-adjective compounds are difficult to translate. Comparison with problems of other traditions shows that Malay, interestingly, bear similarities with Latin--a fact which seemed to have escaped the notice of the precursors, for there have not been any comments made to that effect. Remarks made by Rolfe Humphries (in Brower 1959:61-64) show that like Latin, Malay has no articles, whether definite or indefinite; like Latin too, Malay can express a subject and a predicate in one word. Such features made it difficult for the precursors to bring across the brevity of Malay without making the text appear 'an impressionist sketch' of the Malay original. Another similarity is that, phonemic translations from either language into English would be impossible, generally, as the sounds are different.[23]

Although no mention is made of the use of any models or theories for translating, it is obvious that the precursors, especially those who, like Wilkinson, Winstedt and Humphreys, seem to have <sup>had</sup> an aptitude for verse translation, took pains to apply the most appropriate poetics to their translation. Their constant comparison to forms they are familiar with clearly indicate<sup>s</sup> their search for like models in their culture, and the quality of their translation shows that they

translated according to what they perceived is the closest model. For example, when they realise their text is rugged in texture, they turn to the Greek, the Psalms, and the Old English; not for them the smoothness of Tennyson or Longfellow.

Assuming that attitude towards the text must have influenced the choice of a mode of translating, it is interesting to note that they have accorded the same style in translating the Malay that Ezra Pound accorded his translations of poems from the Provençal, the Italian, the Chinese and the Old English (as will be discussed in Chapter VI): i.e., by preserving the sense and style of the original as best they could. The last point to note is the professionalism of the precursors--they worked on forms they liked and were able to handle comfortably. It is noted here that although the earliest modern Malay verse appeared in the 1930s, none of the precursors translated these. They did, however, lament the destruction of the old Malay literary instinct, and deplore the pedantic nature of modern Malay writing. Of course their dislike of modern Malay verse could stem from the fact that modern Malay verse, especially since World War II, ~~were~~ were patriotic/nationalistic, and therefore anti-colonial. Whatever the case might be, this merely supports the observation that, as translators, they were highly professional.

**NOTES FOR CHAPTER 1**

- [1] This is interesting as it not only dates the mythical romance (which comes under the title of *Burung Geruda dan Anak Raja Rom*, i.e., "The Phoenix and The Prince of Rome", or the modern version *Jentayu*), but also shows that the tale was embroidered around an actual event. The tale is about the plight of a prince of Rome who, on his way to China to marry a Chinese princess, was shipwrecked in Malay waters. The legend is set in the reign of the prophet Sulaiman (i.e., Solomon, son of David), to account for the recourse to genies.
- [2] Nida (1975:215-216) quotes an excerpt from Hervas y Panduro's (1735-1809) survey of languages in different parts of the world, which includes some 300 languages of Asia, Europe and America, which gives a more detailed account:

*Vera que la lingua llamada malaya, la qual se habla en la peninsula de Malaca, es matriz de innumerables dialectos de naciones islenas, que desde dicha peninsula se extienden por mas de doscientos grados de longitud en los mares oriental y pacificos. ... La Lengua malaya se habla en dicha peninsula, continente del Asia, en las islas Maldivas, en la de Madagascar (perteneciente al Africa), en las de Sonda, en las Molucas, en las Filipinas, en las del archipelago de San Lazaro, y en muchisimas del mar del Sur desde dicho archipelago hasta islas, que por su poca distancia de America se crein poblados por americanos. La isla de Madagascar se pone a 60 grados de longitud, y a los 268 se pone la isla de Pasqua o de Davis, en la que se habla otro dialecto malayo, por lo que la extension de los dialectos malayos es de 208 grados de longitud. (Nida 1975:215-216)*

The Malay dialect, it appears, is spoken in a region which stretches across 208 degrees in longitude, extending from longitude 60 to longitude 268.

Sir Frank Swettenham (1907:158) reports that "Distinct and

unequivocal traces of a Malayan language have been found from Madagascar to Easter Island, and from Formosa to New Zealand, over 70 degrees of latitude and 200 of longitude".

Simeon Potter (1971:123) lists Malay as one of the thirteen "great languages" of the world--the thirteen, in order of numerical importance, being: Chinese, English, Hindustani, Russian, Spanish, German, Japanese, French, Malay, Bengali, Portuguese, Italian and Arabic.

- [3] For example, the Malay language differentiates, in a dozen ways, modes of carrying: on the head, on a yoke, in the hand, on the back, under the arm, etc..
- [4] The following excerpt from the Preface to Hugh Clifford's and Frank Athelstane Swettenham's Malay dictionary is interesting, as it not only repudiates part of Winstedt's claims, but also explains how such mistaken claims could have been made:

It has been pointed out with irritating persistence that Malay is an imperfect speech medium for scientific and abstract reasonings; this statement is entirely correct, but the genius of Malay . . . lies in a wholly different direction. As a tongue which is capable of expressing, with admirable terseness, the most minute shades of difference between . . . many states of feeling--Malay has few rivals. Like French, it is essentially a diplomatic language, and one admirably adapted for concealing the feelings and cloaking the real thoughts. Not even in French is it possible to be so polite, or so rude, nor to say such rude things with every appearance of exaggerated courtesy, as is the case in Malay. In a language such as this, which is essentially idiomatic, and in which many words in themselves contain what in English would require a whole sentence to express, it is fatally easy to miss some of the more rarely used terms . . . (Clifford and Swettenham 1895:ii-iii)

In view of the above observation, it is difficult to see how Malay could be said to be lacking in abstract words to express emotions. Of course the

Malay is notorious for being reticent when his feelings are deeply involved (much like the gentle-born British with their 'stiff upper lips' as observed by Winstedt 1969b, in his memoir), and of course it would be impossible to find Malay equivalents for some English words which express emotions, but then it is also impossible to find English equivalents for some Malay words. The word */amok/*, for example, which portrays a state of being, both physical and psychological, seems to have no equivalence in English, and is borrowed, with only a slight adaptation, as the word */amuck/*; the word */kampong/* in Malay gives rise to */compound/* in English. The useful Malay word */geram/* has no English equivalent. It describes a state of welling emotion, whatever the emotion. */Geram/* at looking at a baby's pink, chubby cheeks, for example, leads adults to pinch or stroke those cheeks, while */geram/* with someone or something irritating might lead one to throw things, curse or seethe with fury and/or frustration.

The word */berbalam-balam/* perhaps illustrates best Malay's capacity for condensing a whole picture into one word, as mentioned by Clifford and Swettenham. This word describes the light and shade (usually of hill/mountain ranges) apparent to the observer, caused by variations in the distance from the observer.

- [5] Although the *Bataviaasche Genootschap*, or the Batavian Society for Arts and Sciences (of which Raffles, who was Lieutenant-Governor of Java from September 1811 to March 1816, was one-time president) was formed in 1778 (Parry 1974), it was well and truly eclipsed by the Asiatic Society of Bengal, and only became known in Raffles' time. This might have led

Ismail (1974:6) to conclude that "it was in this [the nineteenth] century that the . . . Batavian Society . . . was founded". Lightfoot (1973:155) noted that the society languished after Raffles left.

- [6] See also Blake's "London" in *Songs Of Experience*.
- [7] Maurice Collis, writing on *Raffles* notes that:

In 1801, . . . Wilkins, after being invalided home, was put in charge of the East India Company's library in East India House, Leadenhall Street. As Raffles was with him in the same building for four years, it may safely be assumed that they met and that Raffles was stimulated and encouraged by this pioneer orientalist of fifty-two. (Collis 1966:32)

Collis also reports that Raffles was in frequent correspondence with William Marsden, one of the leading British orientalists of the day. Marsden took every opportunity of mentioning his friend's (i.e. Raffles') name to the people he meets, one of whom, Sir Humphrey Davy, was to found the London Zoo with Raffles (Collis 1966:89).

- [8] William R. Roff in the Introduction to his selection of *Stories By Sir Hugh Clifford*, sums up the reason for direct British intervention in the Western Malay States as being merely:

a desire to exploit the economic resources of the hinterland of the Straits Settlements; a desire to secure the peninsula as a British sphere of influence against possible intrusion by other European powers; and changing attitudes in London about the value and function of colonial possessions. (Roff 1966:xi)

- [9] According to Barr:

In the course of time, the Chinese--most of whom were young and male--had formed rival secret societies, as was their wont, and, in 1872, civil war broke out in the mining district of Larut, in Perak, where contending factions fought for control of the mines and the main river outlets. (Barr 1977:3)

- [10] W(alter) W(illiam) Skeat (1835-1912), according to the *OCEL*, was one

of the greatest of the nineteenth century editors of Old and Middle English literature. He did Early English as well, but:

his greatest works were the editions of Langland's *Piers Plowman* (published in 1886, after twenty years' work) setting out in parallel the three manuscript versions, the existence of which was Skeat's discovery . . . and of Chaucer (7 vols. 1894-7, largely establishing the canon and publishing non-canonical works in vol. 7), both of which have been printed throughout the 20th century. (OCEL:909)

Wilkinson, however, does not appear to be impressed: he comments most acridly on Skeat's translation of a Malay phrase thus:

How is the [English translator] to reproduce the softness of the language itself--the "Italian of the East" . . . It is hard enough for him to avoid the snares and pitfalls of "literal" translation--of the process that takes *kur semangar*, the tenderest expression in the Malay language,

*Thou art my love, my life, my all,*

*The very soul of me,*

and then translates it: "cluck, cluck, soul of So-and-So." (Wilkinson 1907:55)

He gives as the source of this atrocious translation, Skeat's *Malay Magic*, in which the (mis)translation appears on pages 48, 49, and 574-578.

Another mistranslation is that of the statement "'*Kun*' . . . '*Payah kun*'". In footnote 2, is the following explanation:

*Payah* probably stands for *supaya*, perhaps with the meaning "so also." *Kun* in Arabic means "be." (Skeat 1900:4)

Here, Skeat guesses at the meaning, and guesses wrongly. '*Kun Faya Kun*' is a quotation from the Qur'an. In Malay, '*payah*' means 'difficult'.

- [11] Birch, like Cooper in the story, was stabbed to death.
- [12] Here there was no bloodbath: the Perak War, as Sir Peter Benson Maxwell pointed out (as reported in Barr 1977) was a misnomer. It was no Kandyan War (1803), no Anglo-Burmese War (1885-86), no



Ashanti War (1824-27, 1873-74, 1893-94, 1895-96), no Zulu War (1879), no Boer War (1899-1902)--in fact, no war at all. There was no Plassey (1757), no Khartoum (1885), no Isandhlwana (1879), no battle of any kind.

- [13] A lot of research must have gone into this story of Maugham's. His words, "The Malays are shy and very sensitive" seem like echoes of the following words in R. J. Wilkinson's Preface to *Papers on Malay Subjects* (Wilkinson ed., 1907:iv): "there is no shyer . . . more sensitive race than the Malays".

Warburton's snobbery/awe of aristocracy could be a reference to how the others might have reacted to Clifford's own lineage: "he was a scion of one of the most notable Roman Catholic landed families in England" (Barr 1977:75; see Appendix C for details).

Warburton's attitude towards Malays seems to be a reflection of the precursors', especially Hugh Clifford's, who speaks of Malays as: "that very human section of our human race which ignorant English calmly class as 'niggers'" (as quoted in Barr 1977:85). Clifford, who was not a product of public schools, never looked upon the natives as savages, not even 'noble' ones. (This attitude, more than anything else, separates him from the general product of public schools.) Rather, like Warburton, he found them to be 'gentlemen' (see Appendix C for more details on Clifford). This reference to Malays as 'gentlemen', or more specifically as 'nature's gentlemen' is also intriguing, for James Kirkup (1965:95) in his book *Tropic Temper: A Memoir Of Malaya*, also makes a similar allusion: "The Malay, they say, is 'nature's gentleman'". Research has

produced a poem of that name by Linton (undated; see Appendix A). It would be interesting to find out which influenced which--the poem the colonials, or the colonials the creation of the poem. What might also have happened is for the early colonials to have influenced the poet, who, in turn, influenced the perception of later colonials; of course, the creed of the gentleman was very much in vogue in Victorian England. A point of interest is that, if it were chronologically possible for the poem to have influenced the colonials, then it is a wonder that it is not more widely distributed; this study has found it in only one source. The only entry under Linton in the *OCEL* (:575) is "Linton, Eliza Lynn (1822-1898)". The only text which contained the poem was a collection compiled for schools (see bibliography). This is interesting, for if Linton were Victorian, and the poem was to be found in school readers, the public school products would have had access to it.

- [14] James Woodford Wheeler Birch, who pursued his civilizing mission with such high-minded zeal and a total lack of understanding and respect for the rights and feelings of others, had served entirely in Ceylon before taking up the post of Colonial Secretary in the Straits Settlements in 1870 (Gullick 1969:54). The Empire in Ceylon has a history of political intrigues, treachery and savagery--the Kandyan War of 1803, for example, was alleged by a British officer to have been conducted "by both parties, Christian and Heathen, with savage barbarity" (Hicks 1972:944). To Birch (and to Clarke before him), all Eastern people were "perfectly incapable of good government" (Barr 1977:10). Miller (1963) describes Birch as

having "little tact". According to Miller:

he appeared insensitive to Malay customs and feelings, and his unbending attitude was reflected in a report in which he said, "It really concerns us little what were the old customs of the country, nor do I consider they are worthy of any consideration in dealing with the present" . . . (Miller 1965:119)

This proved fatal, of course, but the outcome, in a society which had as one of its maxims the saying: *Biar mati anak, jangan mati adat*, which means, literally: *Let your children die, not your customs*, was to be expected.

- [15] According to Barr (1977), Clifford wrote more than eighty short stories and essays reflecting his nostalgia for life in rural, independent Malaya. Obviously his first posting in Pahang left an indelible impression on him, for, long after he left the country, he still identified with it. (See also Appendix C.)

- [16] Herbert Van Thal claims that:

No man . . . understood the people and customs of the Federated Malay States more than he [Swettenham] did. (Van Thal 1951:346)

Sheppard in the Preface to Winstedt (1969b), notes that after the surrender of the Japanese in 1945, Swettenham was co-signatory (with Sir Cecil Clementi) to Winstedt's letter to the London *Times*, which sought to influence the British Government to abandon "its misconceived plan for a Malayan Union".

- [17] It is noted that the three precursors discussed in greater detail here, all had different ideas from that of the Crown as to how progress or development in the Malay States ought to take place. Both Clifford and

Maxwell were against encroachment of Malay land, or of interfering with existing Malay land codes. Wilkinson, as reported in Roff (1967), and like the outlawed missionaries in India (see section 3.2.1), was for a better education for the natives. Swettenham, on the other hand, as reported in Barr (1977), although a 'Malay' man, saw no point in educating the natives, since it would only make them feel above doing the manual labour they ought to be doing, and therefore unfit for their station in life. (A Malay school teacher's handbook issued in 1929 contains a curriculum based on basic reading, writing, sweeping, gardening, wood-work, and basket-weaving.)

In *Papers On Malay Subjects*, writing on "Malay Proverbs On Malay Character", Wilkinson (1907) notes that Swettenham has misjudged the Malay character. According to Wilkinson:

Sir Frank Swettenham has thoughtlessly described the Malay as

The mildest-mannered man

That ever scuttled ship or cut a throat.

Such a quotation rather suggests an unctuous hypocrite, which the Malay certainly is not. He hates shams of all sorts. (Wilkinson 1907:8)

Wilkinson, like Clifford, is aware that:

the respect for birth is so great in Malaya . . . [that the feeling] credits every class of the community with an honourable part in the theoretical constitution of the country. It has saved the Malays from servility or adulation of rank or wealth and has made of them a singularly dignified and self-respecting race of men. Good breeding is the highest ideal with them. (Wilkinson 1907:7-8)

- [18] Daillie objects to the following entry on *pantun* in *A Handbook to*

*Literature* (see Appendix B) compiled by C. Hugh Holman:

The *pantoun* may consist of an indefinite number of four-line stanzas, but in any case the second and fourth verses of one stanza must reappear as the first and third lines of the following stanza. The stanzas are quatrains, the rhyme scheme being *abab, abab*. In the final stanza, the first and third lines of the first stanza are repeated in reverse order, the poem thus ending with the same line with which it began. Usually considered as one of the sophisticated French forms though, as a matter of fact, the *Pantoun* was taken over from the Malaysian by Victor Hugo and other French poets. This primitive origin is evident in the monotonous repetition of lines, a monotony possibly derived from the rhythmic beating of the oriental tom-tom. (Holman as quoted in Dailie 1988:17-18)

According to Dailie:

The American writer has accumulated assumptions and errors while he ought to have known better than taking for granted assertions which stand so bluntly wide apart from the truth. First of all because, if any pantun in world literature is really worthy of consideration, it is naturally, by right of birth and achievement, as the only original and genuine form of this kind, by far the Malay pantun. Secondly, because the error is at least threefold: in giving a description not of the authentic model itself, but of what certain French poets of the XIXth Century made of it; then in propagating the idea that the so-called "pantoun" may have been one of the sophisticated French forms whereas it was only an artificial and superficial imitation of a genuine poetic genre which in itself was never understood at that time, . . . and as such cannot be said to have become a popular form of poetry in France; moreover, in speaking of a <<primitive origin [...] evident in the monotonous repetition of lines etc.>> which seems to me utterly misplaced and ludicrous in view of the fact that the Malay pantun is anything but "primitive" but, on the contrary, such a perfectly mastered exquisitely balanced, highly subtle and amazingly terse form of poetry. (Dailie 1988:18-19)

- [19] Clifford seems to have made *pantun* not just an object of study, but a part of his life; he seems to have a ready stock of these "condensed, witty" quatrains (Finnegan 1978:Introduction), for in one of his stories, he wrote that when the narrator was moved by utter longing for the past, the following happened:

Almost unconsciously, as I sat there in the half-light, I groaned

aloud, and the words of an old-world quatrain of the people rose  
unbidden to my lips--

"Betel-nut Island boasts a new town;  
Kapitan Oli' is its king.  
Think not upon days that are dead.  
Or, bowing low your heads, the tears will flow."

It was a rhyme fashioned rudely by the fisher-folk of Kedah when Captain Light and his company of adventurers broke in upon their solitude, wrung Penang (Betel-nut Island) from their Sultan, and ground the heel of the white man into the face of a lovely land. It is pitifully inarticulate, as are most Malayan expressions of any sentiment which all Malaysians share; but in the vernacular it has a sob in it--a note of mourning for that past which has been taken away never to return--such as a man may catch who has ears with which to listen, and a heart with which to understand. (From "In The Half-Light", *Malayan Monochromes*, Clifford 1913:280-281)

- [20] Verse with a rhyme scheme similar to that of *syair* is of course not unfamiliar in English. It might not have been popular, but it has been used before. Charles I, during his captivity at Carisbrook Castle in 1648, used 24 three-line stanzas with this rhyme scheme to write on "Majesty In Misery; Or, An Imploration To The King Of Kings", as did John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, who wrote 17 stanzas of mono-rhyming triplets in "Upon Nothing". Tennyson used mono-rhyming quatrains in "The Eagle"; Robert Herrick in "Whereas In Silks My Julia Goes"; Robert Frost in "Provide, Provide"; Dante Gabriel Rossetti in "The Woodspurge" quatrains; D. H. Lawrence in "Giorno Dei Morti"; Thomas Hardy in "The Convergence Of The Twain", which are lines on the loss of the "Titanic", and again in "Beeny Cliff March 1870 - March 1913"; R. Crashaw had 21 stanzas in "Wishes For The Supposed Mistress"; Francis Thompson wrote 26 mono-rhyming stanzas in "A Fallen Yew", and Browning wrote 15 stanzas with this rhyme scheme in "A Toccata Of Galupis".

- [21] It would be interesting to find out if the precursors noticed the Malay proverbs which drew on similar experiences as their ancient Greek counterparts. The one about crabs is an example: the ancient Greeks commented on the futility of teaching crabs to walk straight; the ancient Malays commented drily on the attempts of "parent crabs trying to teach their young to walk straight".
- [22] In the story "At The Heels Of The White Man", from *Studies In Brown Humanity*, Clifford notes the following about the Malay:

To begin to know anything at all about the Malay, you must realise, from the first, that he is intensely self-respecting. He possesses, in a high degree, one of the most characteristic qualities of the English gentleman . . . (Clifford 1898:122-123; emphasis added)

The word "gentleman" is interesting; it seems to reflect the temperament of polite society in England. The Victorian creed of the 'gentleman' has obviously been successfully imbibed by the cadets, for on encountering the Malays, most realised as did Clifford, that here were 'nature's gentlemen' (as portrayed in Linton's poem; see Appendix A). Such impressions are important, for they decide the treatment eventually meted out. The Malay was not a savage to the precursors, and so they were not treated like one. An ironic twist here is that because the Malays would not work for fame or money (Clifford), the British had to import labour, from both China and India, inadvertently creating the racial problem which is uniquely Malaysian.

- [23] Exceptions are poems like "*Tak Tun*" or "*dundun cakcak*" by A. Ghafar Ibrahim (1976, 1978) which Aveling describes as "purely sound poems"

(Aveling in A. Ghafar 1976:60), and words such as /ma/, which sounds very much like /mak/ in Malay, and which stands for /mother/ in other languages as well.



## CHAPTER II: PERPETUATION

Left by his Sire, too young such loss to know,  
Lord of himself--that heritage of woe.

- Byron -  
Lara (1814), canto I, st. 2

In any tradition, the *precursors* are succeeded by *pioneers* (Lefevere 1977:1), who, according to Radnitzky, are:

polemically oriented on other intellectual traditions flourishing in the intellectual milieu. They formulate the raw program of the tradition and often they formulate its manifesto . . . (Radnitzky as quoted in Lefevere 1977:1)

In the Malayo-English tradition, this role has yet to be filled. A survey of available data shows that works which are "polemically oriented on other intellectual traditions flourishing in the intellectual milieu" have yet to appear, and a "raw program" for the tradition has yet to be formulated, as also its manifesto. Thus, the tradition (as it must now be called for simplicity's sake) has some way to go before reaching the normal second stage of development. As such, successors to the precursors cannot rightly be labelled *pioneers*. [1] They will, instead, be labelled *perpetuators*.

Compared to the birth of the tradition, its perpetuation is a mundane affair. On the whole, very little is known about the motive/motivation for translating (or the *why*-factor), although much could be surmised (see note [2] of the Prologue, for example). The interest of this phase lies in the contrast it bears to the previous scenario and in the ensuing problems: the translation is no longer done only by native speakers of the Target Language (TL); i.e., there is now a change in the *who*-factor of the translation process. The TL community (or TLC), too, changes, following the change in the role of English. The *what*-factor, the type

of text being translated, has diversified: as well as traditional verses, modern, non-traditional ones, too, are being translated. There might also be changes in the reason for translating, i.e. in the *why*-factor, but unless stated, these are changes that can only be guessed at.

## 2.1 THE SETTING

Whether by accident or design, the different stages of this phase of development in the Malayo-English tradition of verse translation reflect the political changes in the country/region. The first substantial work was published in 1957, the second in 1963, and the rest after 1971, all significant dates in the history of Malaya. The first book, *Flowers of The Sun* is by Katherine Sim,[2] and is a study of *pantun*. Because Sim is of Chinese descent, Sim's choice of writing on *pantun* at this point in time is interesting, for the year was 1957, the year Malaya gained political independence from Britain. The Malayan population, which was composed of 90% Malay before British advent, is now multi-racial. The year 1957 marks the first time that the different races of the peninsula were left to themselves;[3] and it is generally believed that the best way to know the Malay is through his language and his *pantun*. Seen in this perspective, the effort of the first perpetuator seems to be an attempt by a non-Malay to understand her Malay neighbours.[4]

For the next five years nothing else seems to have been done, and this is to be expected.[5] Malaya was in a state of emergency with the task of nation-building taking place amidst threats from communist terrorism. This state lasted till 1960. Moreover, the gradual implementation of Malay as a national language placed greater emphasis on translation into Malay, rather than from

Malay into other language/s. However, this period saw a prolific production of patriotic, non-traditional verse, as Malay nationalism, born during the war years, flourished in the first flush of independence.[6] These verses are important to the perpetuation of the tradition, as they are next to be translated.

The second major work, consisting of modern Malay verse, as mentioned, was published in 1963, the year Malaysia was formed from the former British colonies of Malaya, North Borneo, Sarawak, and Singapore. With the formation of Malaysia, the number of non-speakers of Malay increases. So despite moves to strengthen the position of the national language, English seems set to be the *lingua franca* of the intellectual elite--for a while, at least.

The (bilingual) volume, *Modern Malay Verse 1946-1961*, as the name suggests, is a collection of non-traditional Malay verse. The poems are selected by Oliver Rice and Abdullah Majid and "translated by Abdullah Majid, Asraf and Oliver Rice, with the assistance of James Kirkup and The Poets" (Rice and Abdullah 1963:title page). In view of the political situation, it is interesting to note that the translation is done by Malays, collaborating with Englishmen.[7]

Perhaps this is an indication of the Malay's desire to make others aware of the changes his people have undergone, for modern Malay verse is a break from tradition. The Malay versifier is no longer content to hide his meaning behind allusions--he now speaks out directly, loudly, clearly.[8] The collaboration indicates awareness of the problems of translating Malay verse into English; whether it proves to be successful or not, is a different matter.

That the book is published by Oxford University Press is also significant, for this is the period when foreign-owned companies begin wooing newly

independent nations by showing interest in the cultural activities of those nations.[9] Just as significant is the fact that the translators were employed by OUP. Both Asraf and Abdullah Majid were in the translation section of OUP, and although they translate mostly into Malay (Asraf, for example, with department chief Daud Baharom translated *Cepu Kencana*, a collection of foreign works), they participated in the Oxford in Asia project of introducing Asian works to the rest of the world, through translation into English.

In 1968, the tradition received a boost with the launching of *Tenggaru* (meaning Southeast), a Kuala Lumpur-based journal for literary writers and scholars. The journal, which publishes English translations of creative and scholarly works from the South-East Asian countries of Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand, anticipates the formation of ASEAN, the (A)ssociation of (S)outh-(E)ast (A)sian (N)ations, which was formed in November 1971.[10] With ASEAN, English becomes firmly established as the language of communication between members whose national languages are dissimilar. Through English, the literature of one member nation could be made accessible to another. Not surprisingly, bilingual publications of verse-plus-translation started appearing in the mid-seventies. In July 1988, the journal *Malay Literature*, which contains Malay verse with English translations, is launched, as an effort to introduce Malay literature to the rest of the world.

Other incentives come in the form of literary awards. Thailand, for example, offers the SEA Write Award,[11] which gives annual recognition to outstanding creative writers from each of the member nations of ASEAN. The candidates are nominated by a panel in their country of origin; works submitted

for final assessment by the donor nation are English translations of the original.[12]

Perpetuation of the tradition owes much to such incentives. Statistics show that from 1976 to 1990, there have been at least nineteen books published which consist of, in part or in full, verse translation. The number is expected to increase, as there is now a Malaysian award for translation. The 1991/first winners, Adibah Amin and Hafiz Ariff (formerly Harry Aveling), both perpetuators, translated literary works into English.

Relatively recent forging of political links with Russia and Eastern European countries are also expected to contribute towards the perpetuation of the tradition. Cultural exchanges take place via the medium of English; modern Malay verses which interest the Russians, for example, are translated into Russia from the English translations.

The Anthology of ASEAN Literature project is expected to contribute further to the perpetuation. The project, approved as an ASEAN-funded cultural project in 1982, envisages five bilingual volumes, to be published within ten years. However, problems in translating have delayed the completion of the project. Malaysia produced her first (and, to date, only) volume in 1985.

The participation of Malaysian poets in international gatherings is another development conducive to the perpetuation of the tradition. When Malaysian poets Jihaty Abadi and Puzi Hadi attended the Asian Poetry Festival in Bangladesh in early 1987, for example, the poems they were to declaim were translated into English to enable fellow participants to understand them.[13]

The above developments have changed the status of the translation of

Malay verse into English, from an unpaid activity compelled by love, to a (sometimes lucratively) paid activity, compelled more, probably, by necessity and/or the lure of fame and/or money than by the intense love displayed by the precursors.[14] Whether such a setting is suitable for the healthy growth of the tradition remains to be seen.

## 2.2 THE PERPETUATORS

Unlike the precursors, who were all native speakers of English, the perpetrators are multi-racial, whether native speakers of Malay or English, or multilinguals, to whom Malay/English might be a third or a fourth language. Native speakers of English might be British (Rice and Skinner), Australian (Aveling and Goudie) or American (Newman).[15]

Poet and writer Katharine Sim is the first of the perpetrators. Being of Chinese descent, Sim is an example of a multilingual who is translating to and from a language, neither of which is her 'mother-tongue'. Sim's book, according to Daillie (1988:11), is a successful "introduction to the pantun", passing on to the reader "what she had been taught herself by her *munsyi*, especially about images and symbols, proverbs and customs" which otherwise would have been easy for the reader to pass by unawares (see note [3] for purpose of book).

More than three decades passed before another such translator appears--in the person of François-René Daillie, a French writer, poet and translator. Daillie translates *pantun* into French,[16] but, fortunately for the tradition, in his book, *Alam Pantun Melayu, Studies on the Malay Pantun* (1988), he translates enough *pantun* into English, to enrich the tradition. Daillie's book is a meticulous study of not only the prosody of *pantun* but also the problems in the translation of this

popular verse form.

The motive for the translation of the second book, *Modern Malay Verse 1946-1961*, is explained in James Kirkup's introduction:

This volume attempts to show the making of six poets who, as they are Malays, might also be called 'poets to the manner born'. . . . These six poets . . . are pioneers in the contemporary development of a language that so far has had little to offer of literary merit or interest apart from the often delightfully witty and allusive riddling of the native pantun. (Kirkup in Rice and Abdullah 1963:vii-viii)

The translators and their collaborators describe the problems they encounter thus:

The difficulties of translating into English of this sort of poetry is immense. For one thing it is impossible to render the queer loveliness of sound in [some of the passages] . . . [and] Malay logic is not Western logic: the flow of images is unpredictable and strange, and this often leads to arresting poetic effects which lose their point in English. (Kirkup in Rice and Abdullah 1963:xiii)

This group of perpetrators seems to have searched for parallels from among the familiar, for they make the following comparisons:

We are reminded of the great Americans, Whitman and Sandburg; at times, also, of modern Russian or Polish or Chinese poets, for example Pasternak, Yevtushenko and Mao Tse-Tung, except that these Malay poets are really social idealists rather than social-realists. . . . The large ideas about freedom and history and destiny which tend to sound like banal abstractions in English are passionate realities in Malay life and speech. The Malays' inherently poetic and idyllic nature and way of life, their love of pretty things which may sometimes seem insipid to more sophisticated peoples, the sense of respect they have for the wild forces of the tropical jungle and all forms of aboriginal darkness, together with an innocently fatalistic attitude towards the world: all these things contribute to form a state of mind that is even harder to render and make comprehensible to English-speaking peoples than their essentially poetic, gracefully melodious, witty, vivid and often ambiguous language. (Kirkup in Rice and Abdullah 1963:ix-xiii)

They adopt the following strategy:

Our method was to make word-for-word translations and then to alter--usually very slightly--certain phrases and expressions in the

interests of clarity and poetry. The poets themselves were consulted, and approve of the versions we have produced. (Kirkup in Rice and Oliver 1963:xiii-xiv; emphasis added)[17]

This is different from the strategy adopted by Harry Aveling, the translator of *Tan Sri Bulan/My Lord Moonkite* (1976). Aiming at making "others enjoy" A. Ghafar Ibrahim's poems which he himself has "admired" ever since he first heard Ghafar read them to "a delighted audience" in 1972, Aveling explains his approach as follows:

I have tried to make Ghafar's poems - which are fresh, challenging, good poems in Bahasa Malaysia - into the best English poems I could. (Aveling tr. 1976:v; emphasis added)

To achieve his objective, he resorts to the following strategy: At times this has meant that I have had to move away from literal meaning, so that the sound, rhythm and force of the original could be preserved. . . . At other times staying closer than normal to the Bahasa Malaysian text gives the English reader a slap between the eyes that would not otherwise be possible. (Aveling tr. 1976:v)

The success (or failure) of the method will be discussed later. What is noted here is that, because he believes that "A poem translated into another language dies unless it becomes a new poem", Aveling seeks to make new poems out of the original.

Skinner (1985) and Goudie (1989) each translated a *syair*, the former translating *Syair Junk Ceylon*, and the latter *Syair Perang Siak*. That the task is formidable becomes obvious when it is realised that Skinner's text is made up of 1102 stanzas, while Goudie's has 575 stanzas. Understandably, neither translator attempts to preserve the rhyme.

The motive for translating, whilst not specifically stated, could be gathered from the various introductions and notes. Goudie, for one, was making accessible



"a literary event" (1989:9) to those who would "reflect upon the role and function of one piece of literature in a traditional Malay community" (1989:11). The aim of the translation is "to open a small window on the group of people who first gathered at the court of a ruler in exile to share this literary expression of their situation, identity and aspirations" (1989:10), for which purpose Goudie has carried out an extensive research.[18] In the "Bibliographical Note", he admits to having "a special interest in traditional Malay literature", an interest which is discernible in the meticulous notes he makes and the earnest attempt to paint an atmosphere which might make the narrative *Syair Perang Siak* realistic to the reader (Goudie 1989:1).

Goudie's reflections on the problems of translating such a piece is useful, and so will be quoted here extensively:

How to translate the *Syair Perang Siak* is a vexed question. Perhaps what has to be decided is who will use a translation and for what purpose. What is certain is that its readership will be limited in number and diverse in interests. The translation must therefore try to suit the purposes of a broad spectrum of users and in attempting to do so will inevitably fall short of serving any reader well.

Perhaps the major issue is that the *Syair Perang Siak* is an historical narrative account with propagandist and advocative intentions composed by a poet who was concerned to develop language themes in sounds and word association as well as the owner's ideological themes.

A translation can serve the ideological themes best by emphasising and simplifying the narrative and providing the private reader with some of the information that the poet assumed his audience to have. That solution makes information gathering easier but takes away the character of the text based on the kinds of words used . . .

[A] variety of techniques has been used in the hope that some of the expressed wishes of those who would use the text are satisfied. (Goudie 1989:75-76)

It would be safe to assume that Skinner's aim, too, is at making his text accessible to some projected reader. In the "Foreword" to the text, he explains his 'target audience':

the translation of the text is aimed at a hypothetical English reader with an interest in the history of Malaya but with little or no knowledge of Malay. (Skinner 1985:VII)

This modest aim for translating, or the *why-factor* of the process, has influenced Skinner's method, as can be seen below. The disarming admission that follows shows his awareness of the drawbacks of the method:

The emphasis has therefore been on explaining the meaning of the verses (with the result that the *syair*'s literary merits have not had full justice done to them). I have made some attempt to render the text in a style that an English contemporary of the original author would not find too disturbing (but I cannot claim that the attempt has been successful). (Skinner 1985:VII)

Very little is known about the Malays' reason/s for translating into English.

In the Preface to *Modern Malaysian Poetry* (1980) however, the publishers (i.e. the commissioners for the work) explain their reason for publishing:

This anthology of Modern Malaysian Poetry is the first of its kind to be published by the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka. It is a project undertaken by the agency aiming to introduce and promote important works by Malaysian poets to international [*sic*] audience. (DBP in Newman, tr. 1980:vii)

No Malay translator has stated explicitly her/his reason/s for translating, and this makes it difficult to study the effects of the *why-factor* on the translation process for this group of perpetrators. However, taking into consideration the present setting, several reasons could be postulated. The translation could be:

- (a) an academic exercise;
- (b) a favour to a good friend;
- (c) a means of making money;
- (d) a means of achieving fame;
- (e) a patriotic act (see note [15] in Chapter III);
- (f) a homage to a much-admired text/poet;

(g) an attempt to preserve in English what is greatly loved in Malay;

(h) a means of making Malay verse accessible to the rest of the world.

Or, if the translator translates his work himself, it could be, as surmised in note [2] of the Prologue:

(i) an attempt "to get the eyes and ears of the rest of the world".[19]

Dailie's book, *Alam Pantun Melayu* (1988), might seem anachronistic in post-Poundian times. Translating into both French and English in the book, in the manner of the precursors and, incidentally, of Ezra Pound himself, Dailie shows that rhymes could be made to sound natural and not forced. Of the book, the publishers write:

This book, above all, a personal adventure in poetry, is probably the first comprehensive study on the subject so far . . . [in which] the author hopes to have added his share of genuine discovery and, possibly, a fresh outlook on some aspects of this brief poetic form, one of the most striking in world literature. (DBP in Dailie 1988:back cover)

### 2.3 THE TEXTS

Together, the perpetuators, as mentioned above, translate more varieties of verse form than the precursors. Individually, however, they have their preferences. Both Katherine Sim and François-René Dailie translate only *pantun*; Cyril Skinner and Donald Goudie only *syair*; and Asraf, Abdullah Majid, Barclay Newman, Adibah Amin, Mansor Ahmad Saman, Jaafa HS, Amdun Husain, and Hamdan Yahya only modern verse. Muhammad Haji Salleh translates mainly modern verse, but has translated a few *pantun* in sundry articles as, for example, in the "Preliminary Notes on the Esthetics of the Malay Pantun" (*Tenggara* 11, 1980:45-53). Muhammad's translations appear mostly in *Tenggara*. Harry Aveling translates mainly modern verse (1976, 1978), but the few *pantun* he

translates might have reached a wider audience, for they are in a collection aimed at an international readership [20]. Hasnah translates mainly traditional verse, of various types (1985, 1986), but also translates modern verse (1990).

### 2.3.1 *Pantun*

The latest edition of Katherine Sim's book, now named *More than a Pantun*, is, as Daillie claims of its earlier edition, a useful introduction to *pantun*. Seeking to show, clearly, how similes and proverbs are used in *pantun*, and to "retain something of the essence and feeling" of each *pantun*, Sim prefers to express the translation in "plain simple English", rather than in what she describes as "the customary somewhat stilted rhyming translation" (presumably by the precursors). Examples of Sim's translation are as follows:

*Sungguh berbetik buah berangan.* [2.1]

*Pohon berikat tali benang.*

*Sungguh cantik bunga di taman.*

*Hendakku [sic] petik tempat larangan.*

It's true the chestnuts are spotted, [2.1a]

Their stems tied with a thread of cotton,

Truly pretty is the garden flower,

I long to pick it but the place is taboo.

*Nasi bungkus nasi kering.* [2.2]

*Dimakan sampai Beranang.*

*Jangan pulus biar genting.*

*Biar tinggal sehelai benang.*

Rice wrapped in a parcel, [2.2a]

To eat when you reach Beranang,

Let it be taut but not quite broken,

Let there remain one scrap of thread.

(Sim 1987:15,17)

The following are translations of *pantun* by Harry Aveling as given in Lang's collection of *Guide To Eastern Literatures*:

*Pantuns*

They wear [2.3]  
 bangles on their arms  
 I wear  
 bracelets on my ankles.  
 They say  
 Mustn't do that!  
 I do  
 as I damn well please.

Ouch! [2.4]  
 pricked my foot  
 on a thorn  
 in the swamp!  
 Ouch!  
 hurt my eyes  
 watching her breasts bounce  
 under her blouse.

A thousand doves [2.5]  
 fly past  
 one lands  
 in my yard.  
 I want to die  
 on her fingertips  
 and be buried  
 in the palms of her hand.  
 (tr. Aveling in Lang 1971:101-102)

In the following stanzas, Muhammad illustrates "The technique of suggestion, of subtle allusion", which, he explains, "are invaluable in probing the minds of parents of a maiden sought for marriage":

*Tak disangka menikam pari,* [2.6]  
*Pari ditikam dengan tombak*  
*Tak disangka datang ke mari*  
*Dibawa angin dengan ombak.*

*Dari Rada hendak ke Rokan* [2.7]  
*Sangka mendapat gada-gada*  
*Adakah tuan menaruh intan?*  
*Adakah dapat dengan harga?*

Suddenly I long for crayfish [2.6a]  
 Fishes killed with the spear  
 Suddenly I am arrived  
 Carried by winds and waves here.

From Rada to Rakan [2.7a]  
 I thought I'd caught the gada-gada  
 In your treasure is there a diamond?  
 Can it be owned at a price?  
 (Muhammad in Tenggara 11, 1980:50)

Hasnah translates the following stanzas from the tale of "Awang Sulong Merah Muda" (1985), the verse drama "*Sumpah Mahsuri*" / "The Curse of Mahsuri" (1986) and "*Bahtera Karam*" / "The Sunken Galley" (both by Ismail Hanafiah):

*Batang padi terbelah-belah:* [2.8]  
*Yang sebelah dimakan api.*  
*Bujang Selamat datang tak pernah:*  
*Apalah hajat datang ke mari?*

The padi stalks into halves were split [2.8a]  
 and a half was by fire burnt  
 to what do I owe the honour of this visit  
 for hither, I know, you've never been?  
 (Hasnah tr. 1985:97)

*Anak enggang terbang berempat* [2.9]  
*Terbang seiring menuju paya*  
*Anak dagang taklama setempat*  
*Sampai musim pulanglah ia.*  
 (Ismail Hanafiah undated ms:018)

In numbers of four go the heron [2.9a]  
 To the marshes together they fly  
 Ne'er for long will tarry the errant  
 For wander he must, by and by.  
 (Hasnah tr. 1986:19)

The third example is a six-line *pantun*, uttered by Mahora, the jealous wife of the headman, who was trying to hurry the execution of Mahsuri, who ousted her in the beauty and popularity stake:

Merah berkilawan lembayung senja [2.10]  
 awan hitam gulung berbalam  
 angin barat badainya sengit  
 Ditunggu apa lagikah kanda  
 hari sudah akan malam  
 lagi cepat lagikan baik.  
 (Ismail Hanafiah undated ms:022)

Twilight's veil is gleaming red [2.10a]  
 Black clouds are rolling by  
 The westerly storms are dire;  
 For what, dear, ought we wait  
 For nightfall is surely nigh  
 And the sooner over the better.  
 (tr. Hasnah 1986:25)

Some fine translations of *pantun* can be found in François-René Daillie's

*Alam Pantun Melayu, Studies on the Malay Pantun*, as can be seen here:

Cahaya redup menyegar padi, [2.11]  
 Ayam berkokok mengurai tuah.  
 Jikalau hidup tidak berbudi,  
 Umpama pokok tidak berbuah

The dimmer light refreshes the rice. [2.11a]  
 The happy cock will shake and crow.  
 For lack of kindness life's not nice.  
 'Tis like a tree where fruit don't grow.

Layang-layang di atas bukit, [2.12]  
 Kayu tengar dari seberang;  
 Cinta sayang bukan sedikit.  
 Racun penawar tuan seorang.

Above the hill the swallows sweep. [2.12a]  
 Tall mangroves from the other shore.  
 My love's no little thing to keep,  
 Poison and cure, you're both, and more!  
 (Daillie 1988:71)

### 2.3.2 Pantun Berkait

No discussion of the translation of traditional Malay verse is complete without a mention of *pantun berkait*, the form which gave rise to the *pantoun*

in French versification. (See Appendix B.) Daillie notes that the first *pantun* quoted in French by Victor Hugo:

did not give any idea of the rhyming system of a Malay *pantun*, only of the repetition of lines from quatrain to quatrain, which is not a characteristic feature of the *pantun*, but a mere possible use of it called *pantun berkait*. (Daillie 1988:30)

He explains this rather intricate composition as follows:

The *pantun berkait* . . . is composed of an indefinite number of quatrains connected with each other in the following automatic fashion: the second and fourth verse of the first stanza are repeated as the first and third of the second stanza, and so on to the last. There are some made up of two quatrains only, but there is no theoretical limit to their number, and anyone can always add one or more new stanzas to a given string of *pantun berkait*. (Daillie 1988:48)

A problem with the translation of *pantun berkait* is that:

Such a succession of pantuns quickly become mechanical. In every new stanza, one inherits two lines from the preceding one, i.e. half the *pembayang* as well as the *maksud*. However good the original quatrain may have been, the repetition makes it more difficult for the next one to achieve originality . . . (Daillie 1988:49)

The following are examples of the translation of *pantun berkait* by the perpetuators. In the book *Alam Pantun Melayu*, Daillie translates into both English and French:

Buah berangan atas batu, [2.13]  
Gaharu bercampur dengan cendana.

Jangan iuan kata begitu,  
Bukan tak tahu sindir makna.

Gaharu bercampur dengan cendana, [2.14]  
Tetak rotan di atas peti.

Bukan tak tahu sindir makna,  
Berbalik perasaan dalam hati.

Tetak rotan di atas peti, [2.15]  
Dimuat wangkang dari Cina.

Berbalik perasaan dalam hati,  
Sampailah abang dagang yang hina.



- Berbuat wangkang dari Cina, [2.16]  
 Wangkang besar kepala merah.  
 Sempailah abang dagang yang hina,  
 Tidak menaruh daging dan darah.
- Chestnuts flat on a stone are laid, [2.13a]  
 Sandal mixed with eagle wood.  
 Don't talk to me like this, you maid,  
 What mean your jibes I know for good.
- Sandal mixed with eagle wood, [2.14a]  
 A stick of rattan on a chest.  
 What mean your jibes I know for good,  
 My heart has turned from east to west.
- A stick of rattan on a chest, [2.15a]  
 Carried aboard a Chinese junk.  
 My heart has turned from east to west,  
 He's back indeed, the lowly punk!
- He came aboard the Chinese junk, [2.16a]  
 The big junk with its scarlet head.  
 He's back indeed, the lowly punk!  
 But yet his love for you is dead.  
 (Daillie 1988:50-51)

The following is Daillie's explanation of the *pantun berkait* quoted above:

The whole sequence of quatrains is so closely worked out that it seems practically impossible to isolate any of them without losing much of the meaning. The first one could be accepted as an ordinary *pantun* and understood as the protestations of a lover who refuses to be an object of mockery on the part of his former beloved. But none of the other three can stand by itself, as each progressively develops the *maksud* of the first: the despised lover no longer accepts to be laughed at, something has changed in his heart after his exile, from which he has just come back with the big Chinese junk, his sentiments are the reverse of what they were before, he is no more "flesh and blood" with her . . . Gradually too, the elements of each successive *pembayang* give the dramatic progression of peculiar tonality: familiar at first with the chestnuts on a stone, but also with an immediate of the irony in the second verse, where the words "gaharu" and "cendana" carry the unmistakable echo of a proverbial sentence, meaning "pretending not to know": "sudah gaharu cendana pula/sudah tahu bertanya pula". Or, in other words: you look as innocent

as a handful of chestnuts on a stone, but don't do [sic] as if you did not realise that I am now aware of the mockery that used to be hiding behind your words. Then comes the "tetak rotan" which can convey the idea of a good caning, perhaps to teach the dame a lesson, while the big "wangking", comes as a symbol of exile and return [sic] of the "humble" traveller, now proud and free again. (Dailie 1988:52-53)

In *Guide to Eastern Literatures*, under *pantuns*, Aveling gives the translation of what were *pantun berkait*, although there is not much left of *pantun* characteristics (as discussed in Dailie 1988) in the translation. The original *pantun* (as given in Dailie 1988:73), followed first by Aveling's translation and then by Dailie's, is as follows:

Pilih-pilih tempat mandi, [2.17]  
 Pertama teluk kedua pantai;  
 Pilih-pilih tempat menjadi,  
 Pertama elok kedua pandai.

Pertama teluk kedua pantai, [2.18]  
 Ketiga dengan jamban dahulu;  
 Pertama elok kedua pandai,  
 Ketiga baik bangsa penghulu.

Be careful when you choose [2.17a]  
 a place to bathe:  
 one--a bay  
 two--a beach.

Be careful when you choose  
 someone to marry:  
 one--beauty  
 two--brains.

One--a bay [2.18a]  
 two--a beach  
 three--well downstream  
 from your neighbour's loo.

one--beauty  
 two--brains  
 three--well born  
 from a chieftain's line.  
 (Aveling in Lang 1971:102)

Choose well the place for a swim, [2.17b]  
 First the bay and then the strand,  
 Choose well your bride, not for a whim,  
 First beautiful, then deft of hand.

First the bay and then the strand, [2.18b]  
 Third the river toilet of yore,  
 First beautiful, then deft of hand,  
 Third and better still, highbom.  
 (Daillie 1988:73)

In the *Anthology of ASEAN Literatures, Volume I Malaysia*, Hasnah gives the following translation of words uttered by midwives to their king in a bid to escape His Majesty's wrath:

*Jika ditutuh dahan meranti* [2.19]  
*Dibuat pula kandar kelangan:*  
*Jika dibunuh patik nan mati,*  
*Tuanku juga yang kehilangan.*

*Dibuat pula kandar kelangan* [2.20]  
*Jerang minyak kelapanya muda:*  
*Tuanku juga yang kehilangan;*  
*Orang banyak apalah ada?*

The *meranti* branch when lopped [2.19a]  
 as carrying pole can be put to use.  
 Kill us, and we'll be dead  
 But you're the one who stands to lose.

As carrying pole it can be used [2.20a]  
 oil's denied us for the coconut's green  
 you're the one who stands to lose  
 for useless to you is a multitude of men.  
 (Hasnah tr. 1985:98-99)

In the same volume can be found the following rather erotic exchange of *pantun berkait* between a prince and the princess who has caught his fancy:

[Prince:]

*Gunung Daik dipandang pentan* [2.21]  
*Tampak dari Bukit Seranda*

- Alangkah baik permata intan  
Sudah bercanai, tua tiada.*
- Tampak dari Bukit Setanda,* [2.22]  
*Di atas muara empat persegi;  
Sudah bercanai tua tiada,  
Nilai yang putus hendak dibagi.*
- Di atas muara empat persegi,* [2.23]  
*Tempat permainan jin dan peri;  
Nilai yang putus hendak dibagi,  
Baiklah serahkan kepada jauhari.*
- Mount daik looms vivid, [2.21a]  
when viewed from Setanda Hill;  
wondrous is the ground gem, lucid,  
for age it never will.
- When seen from Setanda Hill [2.22a]  
Above a square estuary  
Age it never will  
Its value remains a mystery.
- Above a square estuary [2.23a]  
playground of fairies and genies  
For its value not to remain a mystery  
The experts must be allowed to use their genius.
- [Princess:]
- Gunung hijau tinggi mengawan,* [2.24]  
*Tempat nyior pauh janggi;  
Ayuhai kekanda muda pahlawan,  
Intan belum bercanai lagi.*
- Tempat nyior pauh janggi* [2.25]  
*Disarang oleh garuda syah Peri;  
Intan nan belum dikarang lagi,  
Harapkan dinilai oleh jauhari.*
- Disarang oleh garuda Syah Peri,* [2.26]  
*Telur menetas anaknya tiga;  
Harapkan dinilai oleh jauhari,  
Bayar tunai akannya harga.*
- Green the mountains touching the clouds, [2.24a]  
home of the golden palms swaying

know then, oh gallant young lord,  
never has this gem known grinding.

Up where the golden palms are swaying [2.25a]  
up where the phoenix dwell  
never has this gem known grinding  
only the experts can its value tell.

Up where the phoenix dwell [2.26a]  
three little caglets have broken their shell  
the experts only can its value tell,  
for "cash terms" only will this jewel sell.  
(tr. Hasnah 1985:275-277)

### 2.3.3 *Syair*

C. Skinner and Donald J. Goudie translate the sense of the *syair*, whilst keeping to four-line stanzas. The following is Skinner's translation of the first of 1102 stanzas in *Syair Junk Ceylon*:

Dengarkan tuan suatu madah [2.27]  
Kisah bagindu Sultan di Kedah  
Negerinya ramai terlalu indah  
isi negeri semuanya mudah.

Listen, Sirs, to this composition, [2.27a]  
the story of His Majesty the Sultan of Kedah,  
many were his subjects, fair his country,  
and prosperous were all who dwelt in it.  
(Skinner 1985:46-47)

SYAIR SULTAN MAU  
LAMA.

The following is an example of Goudie's translation of *syair*. This is the fifth stanza in a narrative of 575 stanzas. Note that the translation of the Malay term *(negeri)* here is different from Skinner's:

Tersebutlah kisah suatu peri, [2.28]  
madah dahulu orang bahari,  
Buantan belum menjadi negeri -  
kayunya banyak akar dan duri.

Here is told one form of a story / told from bygone days of our forebears,  
Buantan had not become a *negeri* / its dense timbers were strung about  
with vines and thorns. [2.28a]  
(Goudie 1989:81)

The following are three out of the sixty-three stanzas translated by Hasnah (ed., 1985:234-249), which is an attempt at a rhyming translation. The verse is taken from *Syair Siti Zubaidah Perang China*:

*Puteri nan marah tiada serperi,* [2.29]  
*melihatkan perang demikian peri,*  
*banyaklah mati hulubalang menteri,*  
*sekalian askar semuanya lari.*

On seeing the extent of wilful damage [2.29a]  
 their anger became quite hard to assuage  
 many were the nobles that succumbed to ravage  
 whilst their followers scattered to escape the carnage.

*Teluh sampai ke tengahnya padang,* [2.30]  
*kedua pihak sama berpandang,*  
*sama menyerbu menetakkan pedang,*  
*bahana seperti terangkat padang.*

Soon they reached the battle site [2.30a]  
 each party now had the other in sight  
 rushing in together to show their might  
 deafening, was the din, that heralded the fight.

*Lalu berkata sultan mengindera,* [2.31]  
*"Tuan jangan banyak bicara,*  
*sudah tertangkap sekalian saudara,*  
*baiklah cari jalan sejahtera.*

He then said, "Come, speak no more, [2.31a]  
 for things are not as they were before,  
 your sisters now are hostages sore,  
 peaceably therefore must you end this war.  
 (Hasnah tr. 1985:234-249)

### 3.3.4 *Seloka*

*Seloka* are quatrains in which, unlike in *pantun*, the same thought runs through all four lines. The rhyme scheme can be either alternate (a-b-a-b) rhymes, resembling *pantun* scheme, or fourfold (a-a-a-a) rhyme, resembling *syair*. Samples of the translation of *seloka* can be found in "The Curse of Mahsuri".

which is a translation of the verse dramas "*Sumpah Mahsuri*" and "*Dayang Telani*", both by Ismail Hanafiah:

*Jika kembali padukanya Ratu* [2.32]  
*Singgahlah dahulu di Pulau Bandu*  
*Ambilkan patik rotan dan batu*  
*Tiada bercerai keduanya itu.*

*Jika tiada Tuanku singgahi* [2.33]  
*Tentu tiada dapat kembali*  
*Turunlah ribut hujan sekali*  
*Ombaknya ganas sukar lalui.*  
 (Ismail Hanafiah undated ms:018)

On the way back, exalted Majesty [2.32a]  
 Call you must at the Isle of Bandu  
 Some rocks and rattan then gather for me  
 For never apart are the two.

If you, My Lord, should fail this quest [2.33a]  
 For you, there'll be no return  
 The winds and rains will a tempest behest  
 And the seas will roll and churn.  
 (Hasnah tr. 1986:18)

*Kalau Telani ibarat burung* [2.34]  
*terbang jauh mengawan tinggi*  
*langit gunung akan kuharung*  
*belum dapat pantang berhenti.*

*Dan! Jika burung diterbangkan dewa* [2.35]  
*melayang jauh di baliknya awan*  
*kucarikan sayap terbang jua*  
*dewa hikmat diajak berlawan.*  
 (Ismail Hanafiah undated ms:032)

Were you a bird now, Telani [2.34a]  
 Flying high above the clouds  
 Mountain and sky would I scale, Telani  
 Never stopping till you are caught.

And! If that bird be by a [g]od snatched [2.35a]  
 And beyond the clouds then flown  
 Why, I will me a pair of wings fetch  
 And challenge that [g]od to a showdown.  
 (tr. Hasnah 1986:35)

### 2.3.5 Rhythmical Verse

Very few of the traditional rhythmical verse has been translated by the perpetuators. This is understandable, since most of the verse is found in Malay folklore--and these have been translated by the precursors. A re-translation, therefore, would most likely be deemed unnecessary. However, the tale of *Awang Sulong Merah Muda* has been translated twice, and below is the original followed, first, by the recent translation (tr. Hasnah) and then by the earlier work (tr. Winstedt):

*Kerbau bunting terayap di padang;* [2.36]  
*Itik angsa tenang kuala;*  
*Merpati lindungan (langit);*  
*Liang-kiang tujuh sejajar;*  
*Taman dengan sekerai kota;*  
*Emas perak penuh di rumah;*  
*Salah sedikit tidak berputera.*

Grazing in his meadows [2.36a]  
 Were pregnant buffaloes  
 Calming the waters, his ducks and geese  
 He had doves enough to darken the skies,  
 Seven in a row stood his granaries;  
 A garden and half the fortress city  
 Silver and gold a-plenty  
 Everything he had, except a baby.  
 (Hasnah tr. 1985:93)

In his meadows kine with calf; [2.36b]  
 Dammed the river dry its outlet,  
 From the flocks of ducks and goslings;  
 Doves so many sky was hidden;  
 Granaries seven in a row,  
 Garden too with battled tower;  
 Houses full of gold and silver;  
 Palace steps of molten gold,  
 Sides of stair of hammered gold,  
 But alas he had no offspring.  
 (Winstedt 1909:35)



### 2.3.6 *Modern Malay Verse*

The first translations into English by Malays are those found in *Modern Malay Verse 1946-1961* (1963). Of the translations in the volume, the most-discussed is that of the poem "*Tanah Melayu*", whose translation is "Land of The Malays", or "Melayuland" (as in England, Scotland or BotswanaLand), but better known as "Malaya". The Malay original is by Usman Awang (1955); the translation in the book, as given here, is by Asraf (1963):

#### *Tanah Melayu*

*KITA rakyat di bumi jantung ini,  
Tiada beda dalam segala apa jua,  
Penanam padi atau buruh memberi tenaga,  
Terkepung dalam semboyan muluk 'demokrasi'.*

*Kita pembina semua ekonomi, begitulah!  
Tetapi siapa yang bisa dirabai kemujuran,  
Sedang tulang-tulang longgar berkisar,  
Tuan-tuan penuh hormat suchinya seperti malaikat?*

*Kita diminta membuat semua bakti,  
Dari titik peluh sampai merah darah,  
Memburu kematian di padang maut terdedah,  
Saudara sama sendiri saling bunuh-membunuh.*

*Ketika penekanan jauh sampai ke tulang,  
Dengarlah jeritan keras tani di ladang,  
Dengarlah teriakan gemuruh buruh di kelang,  
Sama bersatu sederap barisan bangun berjuang.*  
(Usman in Rice and Abdullah 1963:4)

#### *Malaya*

We the people in this land shaped like a heart--  
There is no difference between us in any way,  
The padi-planter or the worker who toils,  
Imprisoned in that grandiose slogan 'democracy'.

We, so they tell us, are the builders of the economy./  
But what good fortune can be ours  
When our bones revolve like ramshackle wheels,  
When masters are fully respected and pure as angels?

We are asked to do every kind of service  
 With drops of sweat and crimson blood,  
 Pursuing death in the naked fields of the dead.  
 Brother against brother, slaughtering each other.

When oppression reaches deep into the bones.  
 Listen to the loud cry of the peasants in the fields!  
 Listen to the thunderous shout of the workers in factories!  
 United, in one great rank they rise to fight.  
 (tr. Asraf, in Rice and Abdullah 1963:5)

Another poem of interest here is the last poem translated in *Modern Malaysian Verse*, which is Zurinah Hassan's "*Kita Perlu Bersuara Setelah Diam Yang Lama*". Here the Malay original is followed by Newman's translation:

***Kita Perlu Bersuara Setelah Diam Yang Lama***

*Hujan telah turun tutuplah semua jendela  
 mari kita bicara sekuat suara di luar  
 mencurahkan kata-kata selepas dendam yang lama*

*hujan telah tiba kita tidak perlu berdusta  
 kekeburan sedang memangku bagai ibu  
 melindungi dari mata-mata yang mengawasi geraklaku*

*inilah waktunya  
 rumput-rumput dilecuri ketakutan  
 bangun kembali mengumpul kata-kata  
 yang terbiar bergantung  
 di ujung bibir yang lebam  
 bangun kembali mengurut dada  
 yang hampir pecah oleh rahsia*

*biarlah hujan berburu ke bumbung  
 kita telah menutup jendela  
 dari malam yang sombong.  
 (Zurinah 1977:18)*

**We Must Speak After Silent So Long**

the rain has fallen, all windows are shut  
 let's speak as loud as we can outside,  
 pour forth words after long resentment

the rain has come, we need not lie  
mist confusion embraces as mother  
protects from eyes that watch each moment

this is the moment  
grass withered with fear  
rises again to gather words  
left hanging  
upon the edge of bruised lips  
rises again to massage breasts  
nearly split with resentment

then let rain chase about on the roof  
we've closed the windows  
from haughty night  
(Newman, tr. 1980:155)

In *10 Sajak/Ten Poems* (Baha 1979), Hamdan Yahya translates Baha

Zain's "*dari puisi apa ertinya*" into "in poetry what we have":

*dari puisi apa ertinya*

apa yang dicari dari puisi  
visi hidup, kebenaran mutlak atau abadi  
antara kata-kata berserakan dalam ucapan yang aneh  
atau kelainan dari surat-surat biasa  
atau tak usah menjemukan,  
penyair ada kalanya lebih tolol dari petani  
lebih siuman perasaan dari akalnya

Cukuplah bertanya yang wajar saja  
tentang ucapan khusus dirinya  
bukan hanya apa yang ditulis  
tetapi bagaimana menuliskannya.  
dan tak usah mencari erti  
apabila dunia sendiri tak punya apa-apa:  
waktu sekadar peralihan yang derus  
tanpa urutan atau perhubungan  
jam dinding sekadar hiasan  
peristiwa menimpa-nimpa bagai kertas bertebaran  
ingatan datang bercampur aduk  
cita-cita dan angan-angan berbenturan  
emosi, fikiran, peristiwa dan waktu retak bentuk  
tak ada erti  
dari puisi  
kecuali diri.

### In poetry what we have

what do we look for in poetry  
 a vision of life, absolute or infinite truth  
 within the jumbled-up words of quaint expressions  
 and its differences from ordinary letters  
 let it not be too boring  
 poets are at times duller than peasants  
 sharper in feeling than in mind

it's enough to ask only appropriate questions  
 on expressions of self  
 ask not merely what's written  
 but how it's written,  
 and never look for meanings  
 while the world itself offers none:  
 Time is a speedy transition  
 without sequence nor relevance  
 the wall-clock a mere decoration  
 events overlap like strewn papers  
 memories appear entangled  
 dreams and aspirations in conflict  
 emotions, mind, events and time in distortion  
 there's no meaning  
 in poetry  
 but self.  
 (Hamdan Yahya in Baha 1979)

In the volume *Salam Benua* (Usman 1982), Adibah translates Usman's

"500 Mereka" (1969) into "500 Strong":

### 500 Mereka

(kepada Siti Nor Hamid Tuah)

*Lima ratus mereka*  
 mara! mara mencium hutan dara  
 lima ratus mereka  
 kapak di tangan parang di pinggang  
 hutan dara mereka rebahkan.

*Lima ratus mereka*  
 petani miskin rakyat tertindas  
 kini bangkit dengan tenaga perkasa  
 dengan berani mereka mengambil milik sendiri.

*Lima ratus mereka  
tajam-tajam tangan undang-undang  
tiada gentar ditangkap tiada gentar dipenjar  
petani berani rakyat tercinta.*

**500 Strong**  
(for Siti Nor Hamid Tuah)

Five hundred strong  
they march! march into virgin jungle  
five hundred strong  
axe in hand, parang at the hips  
they clear the virgin jungle.

Five hundred strong  
poor peasants, oppressed peoples  
now arising, a mighty force  
bravely taking what is their own.

Five hundred strong  
sharp the hand of the law  
unafraid of arrest, unafraid of jail  
brave peasants, beloved heroes of the people.  
(Adibah tr. in Usman 1982:59)

Mansor Ahmad Saman has translated two volumes of poems, *Baha Zain's*

*Tiga Catatan Perjalanan/Three Sketches From A Journey* (1980) and Latiff Mohidin's *Sungai Mekong/Mekong River* (1981). The following are samples of his translation, one taken from each book:

***pengalaman cinta***

*kalau kau hawa berikan aku cinta  
seperti yang telah dibayangkan  
aku tidak akan meletakkannya di balik kaca  
untuk dianalisa dan diuraikan.*

*aku mengerti sejarah tumbuhnya  
mulai dari hati dan bisa mati dalam bicara  
ia tak mungkin diperdebatkan.*

*aku hanya membawanya ke syurga  
ke atas rumput dan ke dalam impian  
mengisi dan menerima pengalaman  
kerana ia hanya untuk kita rasakan  
hingga mengeleparkan dari bibir  
beberapa kesetiaan  
sampai adam terjaga  
bagaikan tidak percaya  
dia telah begitu berani mengucapkannya.*

**the experience of love**

if you eve, give me love  
as indicated  
i will not place it under the glass  
to be explained.

i understand its growth  
germinating in the heart but may perish in words  
yielding not to arguments

i will take it to paradise  
over the grass and into dreams  
filling and drawing experience  
it is only for us to feel  
till on the lips flutters  
faithfulness  
till adam wakes  
as if disbelieving  
he is so bold to have uttered it.  
(Mansor tr. in Baha 1980:59)

**kepada kura-kura**

*kau yang tiba-tiba  
terkapar  
mulut penuh darah  
dan tanah  
di daerah ini  
di pantai ini  
rindumu  
pada tanah hijrah  
berakhir sudah*

**to the turtle**

you who suddenly  
marooned here

with mouth full of blood  
and sand  
in this territory  
on this beach  
your longings  
for the sanctuary  
has come to an end.  
(Mansor tr. in Latiff 1981:39)

The following poem, by Marzuki Ali, is taken from the (bilingual) anthology of translated verse, *Merpati Putih Dan Pelangi/The White Dove And The Rainbow*, published by Dewan Bahasa Dan Pustaka (1990). Although a list of translators' names appear on the title page, the translator for individual poems is not indicated:

#### **PULAU BIDONG ITU TRANSITO**

Mendekatimu  
aku jadi rindu  
dan menjarak cinta kita  
aku terasa hilang percaya  
tentang hak siapa  
tentang peraturan.

ketenanganmu  
aku sangsi dengan bisikan  
para puteri-puteri Vietnam yang dilamar malam  
oleh petugas-petugas keamanan  
oleh tamu-tamu yang mengatasnamakan urusan negara  
atau para pedagang yang mencari niat  
mencari untung sendiri.

dalam malam  
aku melihat lampu-lampu  
pasti, para penghuni lagi bermesra  
antara para kekasih  
seperti aku yang berdakapan dengan cinta.  
dan dirindu ini  
menjadi aku semakin cemburu.

aku melihat dengan duka  
anak-anak pelarian  
menyaksikan pembangunan kita

*dengan menyembunyi niat  
sambil menunggu panggilan  
meninggal transit ke tanah penantian.*

*Pulau Bidong  
berapa lamakah rindu kita  
harus terjeruk?*

### BIDONG ISLAND IS A TRANSIT

Approaching you  
I begin to miss you  
As the distance separates our love  
I begin to loose [sic] confidence  
over the rightful owner  
over the regulations

your tranquility  
I doubt the whispers  
the young girls of Vietnam invited by darkness  
by the guardian of peace  
by the visitors on governments [sic] service  
or the merchants with searching intentions  
searching self interest

in the darkness  
I saw the lights  
I'm sure, the inhabitants are still enjoying  
among lovers  
like me embracing my love  
and this lost makes me feel jealous

Looking with sadness in me  
the children of refugees  
witnessing our developments

with hidden intentions  
while waiting for the call  
leaving the transit for the land of destination

Bidong Island  
how long does our lost  
must be fermented?  
(translator unknown, 1990)



## 2.4 ANALYSIS/REVIEWAL

Research into the Malayo-English tradition shows that changes in the *who*-, *why*-, and *what*- factors might all have affected the quality of the translations produced. This, of course, is to be expected. What is unexpected, however, is that the effects have not happened as might have been predicted from a rational or common-sensical analysis of the situation.

A survey of the works translated, for example, shows that, compared to the grammatically faultless translations of the precursors, the perpetrators' efforts contain a high incidence of grammatical errors. With the present setting, it would be easy to conclude that this is to be expected, since the perpetrators (perpetrators?) are not all native speakers of English. Intriguingly, however, such errors are also found in works translated by native speakers of English, as will be seen later.

Then there is the problem of transferring culture-bound meanings across an ever-widening cultural gap; for it is realised that in spite of the modernising effects of colonisation, the Occident of today is as remote, if not more, from the Orient, as it was in Victorian times, and vice versa, for the simple reason that then there were occidentals who were in a position to know the Orient well enough to bridge the gap in their translations. Now, except in rare cases, such as Daillie's perhaps, few would know the East well enough to avoid mistakes in their translation of culture-bound entities. Here is a case, then, for advocating translation by natives of the From-Language (i.e., the Source-Language). What is interesting to note, from a survey of the translated works, however, is that such mistakes are made not just by non-native speakers of the From-Language, but also

by native speakers.

The above seems to point to *collaboration* as being a potentially useful strategy. Research into the Malayo-English tradition, however, shows that there is collaboration *and* collaboration, and that collaboration alone, without qualification, cannot guarantee positive results. Perhaps a closer look at one such act of collaboration would illustrate this. The first volume of modern Malay verse to be translated was supposed to have resulted from collaboration between native speakers of Malay and native speakers of English. According to English poet/translator, James Kirkup:

The translations from Usman Awang and Masuri were made by Asraf in close collaboration with myself. The rest were done by Oliver Rice working with Abdullah Majid. (Kirkup in Rice and Oliver 1963:xiii-xiv; emphasis added)

However, a survey of works in the volume, *Modern Malay Verse 1946-1961*, would soon show that very little of what could have been expected of 'a close collaboration' is found. This substantiates Muhammad Haji Salleh's comments on the matter. Of the translations, Muhammad says:

Much as we would like to give a long applause and appreciation to the initiative of Oliver Rice and Abdullah Majid, we cannot help regretting the weak and lame versions for our better poems. We hope this has not biased those who read the translations into thinking that the originals are as bad as those of the translations . . .

I do feel that most of the poems in the anthology ['have not really been translated']. (Muhammad 1979:143)

Muhammad illustrates his points with the poem "*Tanah Melayu*"/'Malaya'.

According to Muhammad:

In the poem 'Malaya' ("*Tanah Melayu*") by Usman Awang, like [in] many other poems[,] the failure is in the inability of the translator to make it read like good English. For example, the first stanza reads:

We the people in this land shaped like a heart.  
There is no difference between us in any way,

The padi-planter or the worker who toils  
Imprisoned in that grandiose slogan 'democracy'.

The language still has too much of the characteristic taste of Malay: the flow and the syntax are not English. However, the Malayness of this translation is not that of Usman Awang's Malay. If we look at the first line we notice a sluggishness, while the original's 'Kita rakyat di bumi jantung ini,' has more force of rhythm, sense and a certain grittiness of sound. . . . In the above example the solidity of Usman Awang's poem is diluted into a paraphrase, and a weak one at that. . . . The brevity and conciseness of the original is unfortunately lost. . . . (Muhammad 1979:143)

It is unfortunate that the translation of modern Malay verse should start off so badly. The fact that collaboration was supposed to have taken place must surely have contributed toward the proliferation of badly translated verse in succeeding years. The translations in the above book, assumed to have been produced in collaboration with native speakers of English, probably became the yardstick for subsequent translations of modern Malay verse. Nothing else would explain the utter confidence with which such poorly translated verses are produced subsequently.

Muhammad's comments on these early translations of modern Malay verse will be quoted at length here, as it has been found in the course of this research that most of the problems stated here apply even to recent translations:

There is a lack of poetic imagination in the use of the English language and its resources. . . .

Translation in Modern Malay Verse is generally a simplification of the original. (Muhammad 1979:144)

Muhammad sums up the problems of translating modern Malay verse into English as follows:

I do feel that what belies the high standard of the original is the difference of the levels of the languages used in the original and the translation. The English vocabulary of the translated version is simplified while the Malay original exhibits the power of the mastery over language by the poets concerned. The translators have resorted to common usage, in fact too

common a usage, and they are too prosaic to catch the poetry of the originals. Common language is not the language of Malay poetry. Poetic language is perhaps the most intense language. Only a corresponding intensity and resourcefulness can transfer these qualities over, and do justice to the original. The Malay language in these poems have a characteristic grittiness and interesting verbal qualities, in addition to the conciseness and force of brevity . . .

There are many mistranslations in the poems, not because the translators are inventing too adventurously [*sic*] but because the words replaced are apparently too weak to carry the original meaning or what is more unfortunate, the meaning itself has not been totally understood. (Muhammad 1979:144-145)

Although these words were written in criticism of the translations of verse in the earliest (1963) volume of modern Malay verse, they seem to apply to the translations effected by most of the perpetuators (including Muhammad himself), as can be seen from the following examples.

Muhammad's (mis)translation of the first line of Baha Zain's poem "*beberapa catatan kenangan*" ("some notes from the past" is difficult to understand or justify. The translation appears in several publications: in *10 Sajak/Ten Poems* (Baha 1979), in *Tiga Catatan Perjalanan/Three Sketches From A Journey* (Baha 1980:25,27) and in *Modern Malaysian Poetry* (Newman 1980:27-28). Only the first part of the five-part poem, the translation of which bears similar signs of the weaknesses described by Muhammad (above), will be quoted here, followed by Muhammad's translation, and a literal translation of the original:

*beberapa catatan kenangan*

i  
yang ku tinggalkan  
bintang-bintang berserakan  
pohon-pohon krismas yang duka  
dan di antaranya  
seorang gadis  
berlutut di muka salib  
memohon kesabaran

yang kukenangkan  
 hanya peristiwa  
 datang seperti mimpi  
 menjelma siang ia menghilang  
 menjelma malam ia menggoda  
 deritaku adalah derita alam  
 tak berhenti

ku lihat seorang gadis  
 berlutut di muka salib  
 wajahnya jauh  
 di bibir pelabuhan  
 tak jemu-jemu  
 memohon ketenangan

#### some notes from the past

i  
 what's left are  
 scattered stars  
 sad christmas trees  
 and in their midst  
 a girl  
 kneeling before a cross  
 praying for patience

what's remembered  
 are happenings  
 that come like dreams  
 eclipsed by daylight  
 they trouble in the night  
 my suffering is the world's suffering  
 unceasing

i see a girl  
 kneeling before a cross  
 her figure silhouetted  
 against the harbour's edge  
 never weary  
 praying for peace  
 (Muhammad tr. in Baha 1980:25)

The literal translation is:

some notes from the past

i

what I left behind  
are scattered stars  
grieving Christmas trees  
and in their midst  
a girl  
kneeling before a cross  
praying for strength

what I recall  
are events  
dream-like  
vanishing in daylight  
disturbing in the night  
my suffering is universal  
and perpetual

I see a girl  
kneeling before a cross  
her face distant  
in yonder harbour  
fervently  
seeking tranquility

The most glaring mistake is the translation of "*yang ku tinggalkan*" as "what's left are"; "what's left" means "what remains", implying "what I still have", whereas "*yang ku tinggalkan*" is clearly "what I left behind" or "behind me", implying "what I had to give up" or "what I lost".

Muhammad's translation gives the wrong story, and is therefore a mistranslation. "What's left" implies that the "I" have on his hands a broken-hearted young lady, whereas the first part of the poem is clearly describing the "I's" grief at the thought of his lost love and of the grief that she, too, must be suffering. The whole poem is a powerful description of the "I's" heartache at having to give up a love, probably because of religious differences.

Muhammad's translation of this first part of the poem is, to use his words,

"a lame version" of the original, where "the force of sense", the "solidity" of the original is "diluted" into "a weak paraphrase". Take the word "*duka*", for example. Muhammad translates this as "sad", which would have been suitable if the original were "*sedih*"; "*duka*" calls for something stronger, more intense, like "grieving", "sorrowing", or even "distressed". Similarly for the translation of "*ketenangan*" as "peace", which would have been suitable had the original read "*keamanan*". 'A prayer for peace' is more suitable for a people at war; a heart in turmoil would be praying for tranquillity. A comparison of Muhammad's translation with the literal meaning of the poem shows that, again using Muhammad's words, "the words replaced are apparently too weak to carry the original meaning or what is more unfortunate, the meaning itself has not been understood" (Muhammad 1979:143-145).

Another interesting feature that emerges from the study of the translation by the perpetrators is that, although Malay would seem to have nothing in common with English, since they are, linguistically, totally dissimilar languages, it is possible, occasionally, to give literal translations which are not only faithful, but are more meaningful than any "dynamic recreations" of the original. This aspect becomes obvious when it is realised that those perpetrators who have been "creative" in their translation, have not been too effective in transferring the tone or the message of the original.

Harry Aveling's (1976) translation of A. Ghafar Ibrahim's poem, "*Lapangan Ya-Ya-Ya*", into "*The Field of Yield*", illustrates this and lends support to Muhammad's words. Here is the original, followed by Aveling's translation,

and a literal translation:

*Lapangan Ya-Ya-Ya*

*Di Lapangan Ya-Ya-Ya*

*jam ini aku mau menjadi burung-rung-rung-rung*  
*jam ini aku mau menjadi ikan-kan-kan-kan*  
*berterbang-terbangan + berenang-renangan.*

*Lapangan Ya-Ya-Ya*

*lapangan ketawa*  
*ha-ha-ha*  
*lapangan selera*  
*heh-heh-heh*  
*lapangan terbuka.*

*Tapi, kau tentu mengeleng [sic]-leng-leng-leng*  
*asap rokokmu terus menjeling-ling-ling-ling*  
*ini, u-u-u-Utopia*  
*jadi, kita cari, seada-adanya*  
*di Lapangan Ya-Ya-Ya.*

(A. Ghafar Ibrahim 1969, in A. Ghafar 1976:29)

**The Field Of Yield**

In the field of yield yield-yield-yield  
 You can be a bird word-word-word  
 or a fish swish-swish-swish  
 and fly-fly-fly and swim-swim-swim  
 in and out, out and in . . . .

Come and laugh la-la-la  
 hah-hah-hah  
 and dance a-a-a  
 cha-cha cha-cha-cha  
 out and in . . . .

You wont don-dont-dont  
 You holler dollar-dollar-dollar  
 You kids youre [sic] always looking for Utopia  
 you-you-you kids  
 and your field of yield  
 dont [sic] you know woe-woe-woe  
 its [sic] a sin?  
 (tr. Aveling in A. Ghafar 1976:30)



The literal translation is:

**Yes-Yes-Yes Park (or Yea-Yea-Yea Park)**

In Yea-Yea-Yea Park,  
now I wanna be a bird-ird-ird-ird  
now I wanna be a fish-ish-ish-ish  
soaring-swooping + swimming-swimming

Yea-Yea-Yea Park  
park of laughter  
ha-ha-ha  
park of appetite  
heh-heh-heh  
open park.

But, your head you're sure to shake-ake-ake-ake  
watch out, your cigarette smoke keeps  
peep-peep-peep-peeping/  
this is u-u-u-Utopia  
so, we reach out, for whatever is there  
in <sup>Park</sup> Yea-Yea-Yea<sub>A</sub>.

Stating that his aim is to re-express Ghafar's poems into "the best English poems" he could, Aveling explains that:

At times this has meant that I have had to move away from literal meaning, so that the sound, rhythm and force of the original could be preserved. Translating "Lapangan Ya+Ya-Ya" as "The Field of Yield", for instance, preserves the rhyme of the original title, and also adds a pun which underlines the meaning of the whole poem (to yield is "to surrender" or say yes, yield is also "the product" or "fruit" of the harvest; the poem concerns the fruits of the joyful acceptance of life). (Aveling in A. Ghafar 1976:v)

But how could Aveling claim to have "preserved the force of the original" when he has changed a mischievous poem into something innocent concerning "the fruits of the joyful acceptance of life"? What Aveling fails to perceive here is that the tone is devilish. The second laughter, "heh-heh-heh", is gleeful, lecherous and/or cynical laughter. Then there is the poke at hypocrisy, of the shake-of-the-head when the eyes keep darting at the object/s of desire, of the

smoke-screen that fails. The poem was written in 1969, in the Beatles' heyday, and "Yeah, yeah, yeah" is the refrain from a Beatle standard. The poem "Yea-Yea-Yea Park" perhaps tries to portray the permissivity of those times, and is perhaps simultaneously a comment and a criticism of the mindless aping by Malaysians. Almost all of A. Ghafar's poems are criticisms of various aspects of life in Malaysia, delivered, usually with ironic, sometimes with impish humour, and at other times still, with outright condemnation, as in the poem "*Bila Masanya*"/"When" (A. Ghafar 1976:5).

Of course, it could be, as Aveling perceives it, a poem depicting a naive hippy/flower-child acceptance of life; but the evil "heh-heh-heh" and the last stanza hints that the poem is about more than a "joyful acceptance of life". Whilst appreciating that as Aveling insists, "Every act of translation involves a deliberate choice, a double responsibility--to the original and to the new reader" and that "there is nothing arbitrary about these translations" (Aveling in A. Ghafar 1976:v), it must also be pointed out that perhaps, by translating "Lapangan Ya-Ya-Ya" into "The Field Of Yield", Aveling might have lost an intended allusion in the translation; and by translating "ikan-kan-kan-kan" (etc.) into "fish swish-swish-swish" (etc.), Aveling might have overtranslated: recalling the first four lines of the Beatle song with the "Yeah, Yeah, Yeah" refrain, i.e., "She loves you/yeah, yeah, yeah/ she loves you/ and you know it can't be ba-a-a-d", might not the repeated sounds in A. Ghafar's poem be echoes of the Beatles' drawling of certain words in their song?

Aveling varies his method, claiming that:

At other times staying closer than normal to the Bahasa Malaysian text gives the English reader a slap between the eyes that would not otherwise





changed. The literal translation of A. Ghafar's verse is:

```

                                cawcawcaw
                                caw
                                caw
                                caw
                                caw
                                caw
caw
crows are no poseurs
crows, their spirit boils
light the fire
the fire of exuberance
enjoy the silence
a silence that lasts.
caw
    caw
caw      caw
    caw      caw      caw
    caw      caw      caw      caw
caw      caw      caw      caw      caw
    caw
    caw
    caw
cawwww
they kill solitude
melodiousness of voice
they look for the truth
of their being hated.
awwww
    awww      aaaaaawww
    awww      aaaaaawww
    awww      aaaaaawww

```

According to Aveling he has "admired Ghafar's poetry" ever since he first heard Ghafar read 'Tan Sri Bulan' "to a delighted audience in Kota Bharu at hari Sastra in 1972". Obviously, unlike with the precursors, admiration in this case does not lead to an attempt to preserve the original message. Aveling's translation has changed A. Ghafar's meaning: the translation has a melancholic tone, whilst

A. Ghafar's original is angry, for the poem champions the cause of a hated minority--the crows. (At one time, because they were being a nuisance to city-dwellers, crows were shot.) Aveling's translation seems to be more consistent with Dr. Arnold's (Victorian) creed (quoted in Chapter I) which is that, where he loves, he seeks to improve/change.

Another example of how a "creative" translation changes the tone of the original can be found in Usman Awang's *Salam Benua/Greetings To The Continent*. Usman's poem "500 Mereka" is translated as "500 Strong" by Adibah Amin. The literal translation of this is "500 They Were". The poem is a homage to those brave spirits who "took the law into their own hands" and claimed a piece of their homeland for themselves. It is admiring in tone. It is a poem written after the event. Adibah's translation seems all wrong to anyone familiar with the song "Marching Through Georgia"; it reeks too much of that marching song into which rhythm, unfortunately, however, the words of this particular poem will not fall. There seems to be no plausible explanation for translating "mereka" into "strong"; Usman's expression "500 They Were" implies the unspoken words "And yet they dared do what they did"--which nuance is lost in Adibah's translation.

Another translator who might have been more effective had she translated as she claims to have done, i.e., "more or less literally", is Katherine Sim (1987:13). Sim dislikes the "customary somewhat stilted rhyming translation" (presumably those effected by the precursors), and yet the following stanza shows that she retains the rhyme scheme, but changes the meaning expressed in the original:

Saya tidak pandai menari,  
Sebarang tari saya tarikan,

[2.37]

*Saya tidak pandai menyanyi,  
Sebarang nyanyi saya nyanyikan.*

I am not clever at dancing, [2.37a]  
At every step I stumble and shake.  
I am not clever at singing,  
On every note I fumble and quake.  
(Sim 1987:16)

The '*pantun*'<sup>8</sup> literally means:

I do not know how to dance, [2.37b]  
Any old step will do me,  
I do not know how to sing,  
Any old song will do me.

The same goes for the translation of this *pantun*:

*Patah pasak di dalam kemudi, [2.38]  
Patah di ruang bunga kiambang.  
Kalau tidak bertemu lagi,  
Bulan terang sama dipandang.*

The wedge is broken in the rudder, [2.38a]  
Broken in Hyacinth's well,  
If we don't meet again,  
We can but look at the same full moon.  
(Sim 1987:15)

The literal translation is:

The wedge is broken in the rudder [2.38b]  
Broken in a field of hyacinth  
If we should never meet again  
Why, the same full moon we'll gaze at.

The weakness in Sim's translation seems to spring from an imperfect knowledge of the source culture. In the first example, she injects an 'apologetic' note into the translation, giving the picture of a fumbling and quaking, nervous creature. The Malay original reflects little of that; on the positive side, it reflects the Malay characteristics much admired by Hugh Clifford, and the message sent out is, "I know my shortcomings, but I'll do what I can--take it or leave it"; on

the negative side, it might reflect false modesty.

Sim's second translation, above, ends with a note of hopelessness; the Malay original is a stoic attempt to accept a heartbreaking but inevitable parting, more in keeping with the Malay nature, as painted by the precursors. By giving voice to despair ("we can but"), Sim's translation loses the poignancy of the moment when feelings are held in check. The original paints a tender moment (painted by the field of beautiful, mauve hyacinths) throbbing with unshed tears, made more poignant by the heroic attempt at flippancy. In traditional Malay verse, gazing upon the moon is the favourite pastime of the lovelorn.

A survey of the translations in *Modern Malaysian Verse*, in which the poems-- with the exception of a few poems by Muhammad Haji Salleh, which are translated by the poet himself, and a few others by other translators who are accordingly acknowledged in the foot-notes--are translated by Barclay M. Newman, would show that, as observed earlier, grammatical errors are also found in the translations by a native speaker of English. The title of the last translation in the book is "We Must Speak After Silent So Long", which is the translation of Zurinah Hassan's "*Kita Perlu Bersuara Setelah Diam Yang Lama*". The translation could sound, in Newman's words, "Malaysian Chinese English" (Newman 1976), if uttered with a Chinese twang, or 'Malay English', if uttered with a Malay twang; the expression is definitely not English. The whole poem is rather poorly translated. In Malay, "*Bersuara*" is not "speak" but "speak out". The literal translation of the poem is:

**We Need To Speak Out After Keeping Our Silence For So Long**

It's raining, close the windows  
let's talk as loud as we can outside



pour out words long suppressed

the rain is here, we need not lie  
haze cradles us like a mother  
shielding us from eyes that watch every movement

this is the moment  
when grass scalded by fear  
rises again to gather words  
left hanging  
on the edge of bruised lips  
rises again to massage a bosom  
nigh bursting with secrets

Let the rain gush towards the roof  
we've shut the windows  
against haughty night

Compare also Newman's translation of the second stanza, in which the original:

*hujan telah tiba kita tidak perlu berdusta  
kekaburan sedang memangku bagai ibu  
melindungi dari mata-mata yang mengawasi geraklaku*

is translated as:

the rain has come, we need not lie  
mist confusion embraces as mother  
protects from eyes that watch each moment

whereas, literally, it means:

the rain is here, we need not lie  
haze cradles us like a mother  
shielding us from eyes that watch every movement

Some of the translations in the book are satisfactory, others not--such as that of Jaafa HS's "*Satu Hari Bernama Esok*" (Newman 1980:53-54) and "*Tidak Seindah Yang Aku Mimpikan*" (Newman 1980:57-58). It is ironic that Newman should be making mistakes like those mentioned; a few years earlier, in the article "*beberapa pendapat mengenai terjemahan sajak 'suara' dalam bahasa inggeris*"

in *Dewan Sastra* November 1976, Newman criticises Muhammad for using "Malaysian Chinese English!" (Newman 1976:42).

The above survey has shown that the translations by a native speaker of English (as in Newman's case), or by collaboration with native speakers of English (as in the case of Rice et al.), or by someone "who is fluent in English and Malay" (as in the case of Muhammad)[21] are not necessarily error-free. What is particularly unfortunate about mistakes Newman might make is that they were incurred by a native speaker of English, who naturally is looked upon as a role model. After finding mistakes in Newman's translations, it is to be expected that translations by the Malays would contain worse mistakes. The most cursory survey of recent efforts would show this to be true. For example, the translation of Ali Marzuki's poem, above, has for its last stanza, the following:

Bidong Island  
how long does our lost  
must be fermented?

Next are some of the errors found in two important works, *Tiga Catatan Perjalanan/Three Sketches From A Journey* (Baha Zain's entry for the SEA Write Award, 1980) and *Sungai Mekong/Mekong River* (Latiff Mohidin's, 1981). The title "*semua bakal diketawakan*" (Baha 1980:92-93), for example, is translated as "all to be laughed"; the literal meaning is "all will be objects of derision" or "all will be laughed at", or "all to be ridiculed".[22] The "at" missing in the translation could have been a printing error, of course, but the following error is less easy to attribute to that source. The first line in "*pengalaman cinta*"/"the experience of love", which is:

*/kalau kau hawa berikan aku cinta/*

is translated as:

*/If you eve, give me love/  
(Baha 1980:58-59; emphasis added)*

The 'clause' "if you eve" is a Malay construct, being a word-for-word translation of "*kalau kau hawa*". Of course this might be a deliberate mistake, alluding to the famous 'sentence' "me Tarzan you Jane". But, the original is grammatical in Malay; the translation therefore gives a false impression of the Malay.

Incorrect use of the article /the/ is found in the third line, where:

*/aku tidak akan meletakkannya di balik kaca/*

is translated as:

*/I will not place it under the glass/*

The literal meaning is:

*/I will not place it behind glass/*

The last line is also badly translated, where:

*/bagaikan tidak percaya  
dia telah begitu berani mengucapkannya/*

is translated as:

*/as if disbelieving  
he is so bold to have uttered it/*

The absence of the word /as/ makes the translation ungrammatical, and un-English; the line should have been:

*/as if disbelieving  
he is so bold as to have uttered it/*

But even then the translation would not be satisfactory. Baha Zain's poems are as compact as T. S. Eliot's. There really is no excuse for such an awkward phrasing when the original means, simply:

/as if disbelieving  
that he dared utter it/

or:

/unable to believe  
he dared utter it/

The inconsistent quality of the translations found in *Modern Malaysian Verse* (Newman tr. 1980) points to another problem--the problem of translating commissioned works, especially of living poets. The precursors chose their texts: most of the perpetrators have no say in the selection of their texts. A translator who is commissioned to translate will have to translate the text whatever her/his feelings towards it might be; it would be difficult to translate well a text which is not to the translator's liking. Then there is the problem of collaboration, with a living author. The short, succinct "Translator's Note" in this collection of modern Malay verse, translated into English mostly by Newman, is illuminating, and might explain the problem with this particular collection of translations:

NO slave can please two masters. The poets have exercised their  
license to correct and improve the translation of these poems--  
O, pierced cyclopic slave,  
Tertium Quid is now your name! (Newman 1980:v)

Obviously, the translator is not pleased with the collaboration (interference ?) he receives in the course of carrying out his task; not surprisingly, the translated texts show signs of 'unhappy collaboration'.

Another problem that surfaces is the problem of (in)appropriate 'register'. The problem surfaces in Hasnah's (tr. 1985:92-93) translation of one of the rhythmical passages in the Malay folklore *Awang Sulong Merah Muda* (see 2.3.5, above). The most glaring mistake in the translation is in the last line, where:

*/Salah sedikit tidak berputera/*

is translated as:

/Everything he had, except a baby./

The phrase "except a baby" jars the senses, for it sounds too glib, too modern, and completely out of place. Winstedt, as seen earlier, translates "*tidak berputera*" as "no offspring", which is better, but perhaps, to a ruler, "an offspring" is not as important as "an heir". Other uncalled for substitutions are "waters" for "estuary", and the translation of "*Emas perak penuh di rumah*" into "Silver and gold a-plenty". The original gives concrete images, the translation, vague. Perhaps a better translation, one which tries to be as concise as the original, might be:

Pregnant buffaloes graze in his meadows;  
His ducks and geese calm the estuaries;  
His pigeons darken the skies;  
Seven in a row stood his granaries;  
A garden and half the fortress city;  
A houseful of silver and gold;  
Everything he has, except an heir.

The greatest problem faced by both precursors and perpetuators is the problem of transferring space-, time-, and culture-bound images, especially in traditional verse. Hasnah (1985) and earlier Winstedt (1909), both come to grief with the description of the hero's physique in the folk-tale *Awang Sulong Merah Muda*. The following are parts of the original verse, followed by Winstedt's translation, and then Hasnah's:

*Maka apabila sudah suci badannya, tampaklah rentik panaunya ada  
belaka dengan namanya:  
Di dada tapak catur,  
Di leher merentik balam  
Di siku keluwang tidur  
Di belakang bintang timur*  
+ + +  
*Betis membunting padi.*

The princess . . . orders her page to bathe Awang Sulong, whereupon his  
 beauty spots shine apparent:  
 On his breast a chess-board pattern,  
 On his neck a ring-dove marking,  
 'Bat a-slumber' on his elbow,  
 On his back the 'star of morning'

~~~~~  
 Legs like rice-grain plump and rounded. (Winstedt 1909)

The markings on his skin was such that:  
 belike a chess-board was his torso  
 his neck a mass of blotches  
 a dark patch was on his elbows  
 and a pale one on his back,

~~~~~  
 his calves sturdy  
 like ripened grains of padi. (Hasnah 1985)

The problem here lies in the translation of the word "*panau*" and of the description "*Betis membunting padi*". "*Panau*" is the pale spot indicating the depigmentation of skin by fungus. The ancient Malays, out of veneration for royalty, describe these pale markings, much like a Palomino horse's, as beautiful (when found on royalty), [23] and Winstedt did the right thing by calling them 'beauty spots'; the only thing to object here would be that a 'beauty spot' in English is darker than the surrounding skin, and so the reader would get a 'film negative' image of the hero's skin markings. To the modern Malay, however, "*panau*" is a fungal ailment, an infectious skin disease. Hasnah, therefore, could see nothing beautiful in "*panau*", nor could she overcome personal aversion to these, and, out of ignorance of the ancient Malay perspective, made the unpardonable mistake of describing one of these patterns as "a mass of blotches".

The description of the calf is one of the verb-adjective complexes, which is common in Malay, and so difficult to translate into English, which is mentioned in the Preface of Clifford's and Swettenham's *A Malay Dictionary* (1895). To

translate adequately a graphic description like this would require at least a couple of sentences in the English. "*Betis membunting padi*" literally means "calves like pregnant padi", and is intended to describe the sturdiness and shapeliness of the hero's calves. "*Membunting padi*", according to one interpretation, describes the padi stalk swelling with grain, and not the actual grain.[24] Though both translators might have provided 'howlers' here (if this interpretation is applied), Winstedt's improvisation is slightly worse, as it gives the shape of the calves as "round and plump", which is quite the opposite, in fact, to what was intended. Another interpretation, that of "ripened grains of padi" (Hasnah) has that curvy shapeliness implied, but in miniature.[25] A third interpretation gives the expression as the description of that part of the stalk, just below the grains, which starts to thicken as soon as the grains burst.[26] The actual image is very much like that of an unopened crocus bud-- elongated and wider of girth. The mistakes here are due to unfamiliarity with the geo-socio-localised vocabulary of a rice-farming society, i.e. to the translators being in a different cultural state from that of the original writer/text.

What can be seen from this analysis of the translations by the perpetrators is that, as described by William Arrowsmith in his classic article, "The Lively Conventions of Translations" (in Arrowsmith and Shattuck 1964), and as is usual in translation, the problems met are of two types, namely, the difficult and the impossible. How these problems are handled or ought to be handled will be discussed in Chapter VI, but for now it is noted that the problems of the tradition can be discussed as general problems of translation. Another point to note is that the analysis shows that there can be no generalisation as to who ought to be doing

the translation. This point will be taken up in detail in Chapter III, and again in Chapter V. The next step is to find a suitable theoretical framework within which the tradition could be discussed, which will be the objective of Chapter III.



**NOTES FOR CHAPTER II**

- [1] Newman (1976) criticised Muhammad's translation of Latiff Mohidin's poem "Suara" and Muhammad (1979) criticised the translation of a collection of modern Malay verse. Aveling (1986) suggested models for the translation of *pantun*. Daillie (1988) carried out a detailed study of *pantun* prosody, exploring the various possibilities of translating *pantun* as part of his main task, the translation of *pantun* into French. But none of the pioneering work as specified by Radnitzky's definition was carried out.
- [2] The second edition of the book came out in 1982, under the same title; it was then re-published in 1987, by Times Books International (Singapore), under the title: *More than a Pantun, Understanding Malay Verse*.
- [3] During World War II, there were the Japanese overlords.
- [4] The writer's intent might perhaps be gathered from the following:

To know the pantun is to learn about the Malay--his symbolism, his love of hidden meaning, his metaphors and veiled sayings, his philosophy: the real Malay--passionate, sardonic, kindly, racy . . .

This book explains in detail . . . the meaning of special symbols found in Pantuns for an understanding not only of the Pantun but also of the Malay . . . (Sim 1987:back cover)

Mubin Sheppard writes in the Foreword:

Katherine Sim has captured the elusive and elfin spirit of the Pantun . . . so that those of other lands who seek a closer intimacy with the Malay people and their poetry may share this vision with her. (Sheppard in Sim 1987:9)

- [5] The book *Malay Pantun* by A. W. Hamilton was first published in 1941, was reprinted in 1944 (Australia), then re-published by Eastern Universities Press (Singapore) in 1959, with the last impression made in 1982, but this

is considered work by a precursor.

- [6] After World War II, Malay writers "were seized by certain burning ideals" which dominated their work. A group of them called themselves ASAS 50, or, as James Kirkup (in Rice and Abdullah 1963:vii) puts it, *Generation 50*, whose ideals are: "resistance to colonialism and oppression, an urgent striving towards independence, and a desire for social justice and world peace". Critics, such as Yahaya Ismail (1976) and Umar Junus (1980) are of the opinion that the products of this (experimental) period were melancholic and/or romantic; others less charitably disposed describe them as laden with mawkish sentimentality.

- [7] According to Kirkup:

The translations from Usman Awang and Masuri were made by Asraf in close collaboration with myself. The rest were done by Oliver Rice working with Abdullah Majid. (Kirkup in Rice and Oliver 1963:xiii-xiv; emphasis added)

- [8] Kirkup notes that:

the modern poets of Malaya have for the most part chosen modern, free, almost conversational and often blank-verse forms in which to express their feelings and ideas. . . .

Usman Awang [, for example,] can express common aspirations with dignity and directness . . . [;] his opinions are just and candid, stated without subterfuge, and obviously very deeply felt. He is capable of fine indignation . . . of wryly ironic comment . . . (Kirkup in Rice and Abdullah 1963:ix-x)

- [9] A number of literary awards and literary publications are sponsored by the private sector. The Esso-GAPENA award for literary works of various genre, for example, is most prestigious in Malaysia; publication of the translation of *Syair Perang Siak* (Goudie 1989) is made possible by the Shell companies of Malaysia and Sime Darby Berhad. The Toyota

Foundation has set out grants for promoting cultural (literary) exchanges between 'neighbours' in the region and between these nations and Japan (see Appendix D).

- [10] This became an association of six nations when Brunei joined ASEAN in 1985.
- [11] The SEA Write Award is jointly sponsored by the Oriental Hotel of Bangkok, Thai Airways International and ItalThai Group of Companies in association with the P.E.N. International Thailand Chapter and the Writers' Association of Thailand. In 1981, the Jim Thompson Foundation joined in the financial support of the award.
- [12] Judging from the translations of the works of some of the past winners, Usman Awang's, for example, a great deal of allowance must have been made for the difficulty of translating into English. (See section 2.4 for Muhammad Haji Salleh's comments on the translation.)
- [13] Poet Jihaty Abadi's poems, for example, put together in *Dalam Matahati/Deep In My Heart*, has the following note accompanying them:

This collection of poem is specially publish [sic] for circulation and to be read at [sic] Asian Poetry Festival which is organised by the Bangladesh Kabita Kendra on January 30th-February 1st, 1987 at Dhaka. This festival is under the Chief Patronage of His Excellency Hussain Muhammad Ershad, President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. All these poems were translated into English by Dr. Barclay M. Newman from U.S.A. (Jihaty 1987:1)

Puzi Hadi's poems were translated by Hasnah.

- [14] Frenchman François-René Daillie (1988), might be an exception; he seems to be as fascinated by *pantun* as were the precursors, as can be gathered from the following:

To me, the encounter with the Malay pantun has been until now one of the most striking episodes as well as one of the main elements of the whole adventure of life, not simply of literature as distinct from life, but of life and literature closely mixed together. Thus in my life, the discovery of the pantun is in close connection with that of the country where it was born and of the people who gave birth to it, which I will henceforth call Malaya and the Malays as distinct from today's political notions of Malaysia and Malaysians: inseparable from them, I should say, both as one of the emotional channels of my love for this part of Earth and as an expression, not to say the most comprehensive expression, of the sensitivity, culture and civilisation of its original people.

This is important because, from the very start, my experience of Malaya as a place where I lived, worked, loved, etc. together with its own people with whom I shared life, work, food, joy and love, and my experience of the pantun as the unique, original and delicious fruit of this country and people, of their language, from their remotest past to their present and from the humblest and simplest circles of their society up to the highest and most refined ones, were closely related, intertwined, inseparable for me organically as well as spiritually. (Dailie 1988:1-2)

- [15] It seems strange that Kirkup makes no mention of the activity in his 1965 memoir of Malaya, *Tropic Temper*.

- [16] Amongst Dailie's publications are the following:

*Quarante pantouns malais*, translated into French, with an introduction: "*Anciennes voix malaises*", in *La Nouvelle Revue*, No 392, Septembre 1985, éditions Gallimard, Paris 12pp.

*Quarante pantouns malais (Deuxième série)*, translated into French, with a foreword, in *SUD*, No 69/70 special issue on Translation, Marseille 1987, 14pp.

*Victor et le Fantôme*, about "Victor Hugo's pantun", in "Siècle" No 4, Paris 1987, 7pp. (Dailie 1988:186)

- [17] In view of Burton Raffel's remarks (note [2] of Prologue), it could be assumed that the poets themselves would be easy to please, and might not be the best judge of the translation of their own poems.

- [18] A glance through the "Introduction" of the book, as listed in the "Contents" would show just how detailed a study Goudie has made. In it can be found:

An Explanation of Terminology  
 Perceptions of the Text  
 What we have and how we got it  
 The Places and Times of which the Text tells  
 Maps  
 Events which informed or were ignored by the Text  
 Events which maintained the Text into the  
 Nineteenth Century/  
 A Pedigree of the descendents of Raja Kecil  
 The People of the Text and those Off Stage  
     Sultans Of Siak  
     Others  
 What the Text said to its Audience  
 Questions of use and value for the Text's Inheritors  
 The Origin and Function of the Text  
 The Presentation of the Text and Translation  
 The Text  
 The Translation (Goudie 1989:5)

Goudie also notes that:

The first quite astounding fact is the number of people who knew Syair Perang Siak well enough to recite. There were six principal informants about the wording of the text. They knew the text well enough to recite it in whole or in part and knew it with sufficient precision to be able to come to unanimous agreement on the detail of most stanzas. . . .

Each of the six principal informants bore the title Tengku indicating that they were direct descendants of the Sultan . . . (Goudie 1989:65)

- [19] Muhammad Haji Salleh translates his poems into English (as for example, in Newman 1980); so does Jaafa HS (1976). Kassim Ahmad (1985) translates his English originals into Malay.
- [20] The translations are in Lang's *Guide To Eastern Literatures* (1971).
- [21] In an article on "A 'Summit' of ASEAN Poets", (*Asiaweek* vol.9 No. 18, May 6, 1983), it is noted that, "American-educated Muhammad Haji Salleh who is fluent both in English and Malay . . . would [be] the ideal translator" to translate for those who do not understand Malay or Bahasa Indonesia.

- [22] This last alternative is suggested by Judyth Gregory-Smyth.
- [23] Prof. Hamzah Ismail provides this perspective.
- [24] Nooriah Saad provides this interpretation.
- [25] Prof. Hamzah Ismail points out that this is an alternative interpretation.
- [26] Amdun Hussain (DBP) provides this interpretation, which he claims is supported by the Malay riddle which asks the question "What becomes pregnant *after* giving birth?".

### **CHAPTER III: THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS I: THE BACKGROUND**

Underlining this discussion of translation is the belief that there are general principles of the process of translation that can be determined and categorized, and, ultimately, utilized in the cycle of text-theory-text regardless of the languages involved.

- Susan Bassnett-McGuire -  
*Translation Studies*

Although much has been written on translation and the theory of translation (Lefevere 1975, Lawendowski 1978 and Frawley 1984), almost all of the discussions are confined to the Anglo-European traditions of translation; outside of these, only the translation of works from major languages, such as Sanskrit, Chinese and Japanese have been touched upon. The problems of translating Third World literature into English have not been dealt with satisfactorily, if at all (Raffel 1971, 1988; Mukherjee 1981; and Ramanujan 1989). These relatively new traditions, such as the Indo-English tradition, where works in the various Indian languages are translated into English, the ASEAN-English "traditions", where literatures in the languages of the ASEAN nations are translated into English, and all other traditions where literatures from Languages of Limited Diffusion (LLD) are translated into English, present a fresh set of problems which occasionally necessitate modifications to notions entrenched in the older traditions.

This chapter proceeds from the conviction that, with a process as complex as *verse translation*, successful practice would almost certainly depend upon "a carefully determined conception of translation, conceived with a precise function in mind" (Bassnett-McGuire 1980:104). Of course, methods may be put into practice without seeming to require any theory on the subject,[1] and as Peter Newmark (1982:36) observes, "translation theory . . . cannot make a bad translator

into a good one," but translation theory, especially if its purpose is "to reach an understanding of the processes undertaken in the act of translation" (Bassnett-McGuire 1980:37), can show the practitioner far more of what is involved in the process than s/he is usually aware of (Newmark 1982:36).[2]

Coupled with the above conviction is the awareness that because the tradition is new and anomalous, it may not always be possible (or comfortable) to discuss it in terms of traditional (especially Anglo-European) paradigms. This does not imply a rejection of any set of paradigms simply because of its association with established traditions; nor does it express a call for something completely new (Popper).[3] It does, however, mean that whilst agreeing with Lefevere that, ideally:

A cumulative development of the theory would do well to avoid the use of jargon as well as futile terminological squabbling. . . . [and that] . . . It might be best served by using, as far as possible, concepts traditionally current in the discipline, rather than to replace them with new ones whose relevance is not immediately obvious . . . (Lefevere 1978:234-235)

it is also conceded that even a simple discussion of translation in this new context would require either the introduction of new terms/concepts and/or the modification of some of those "traditionally current" terms/concepts.

### **S.1 THE PROBLEM WITH METHODOLOGY**

The difficulties of attempting to work in an "immense" field "in the absence of any generally acceptable methodology to deal with the problem as a whole" are well discussed in Lefevere (1975:Introduction). Lefevere observes that although various authors have tried to answer the methodological question in various ways, three tendencies become apparent: firstly, the detail study (as in "X as translator of Y"); secondly, the symposia or collection of essays on literary



translation; and thirdly, the discussion of specific problems (in the translation of literature from one or more languages into one or more others). As the present study undoubtedly falls under the third category, perhaps it will prove timely to note here the pitfalls to avoid.

A common weakness of the third approach, according to Lefevere, is that:

Examples are taken from a very wide variety of texts and languages, leaving the bewildered reader with the suspicion that they have been carefully selected and sifted to "prove" some preconception on the author's part, rather than that the author has tried to construct a convincing case on the basis of examples . . . There [is] no attempt to test theories by unselected examples . . . (Lefevere 1975:2)

This will be a difficult fault to avoid as, firstly, it is difficult to differentiate between "carefully selected and sifted" and random (?) examples.[4] Secondly, there is also at work "a very human trait of the individual", which manifests itself in what Abraham Kaplan (1964) calls *the law of the instrument*. He formulates it as follows:

give a small boy a hammer, and he will find that everything he encounters needs pounding. It comes as no particular surprise to discover that [people formulate] problems in a way which requires for their solution just those techniques [and data which are available to them]. (in Worsley 1971:76)

The law of the instrument, Kaplan notes, "is by no means wholly pernicious in its working", for after all, as Peirce is reported to have commented (in Worsley 1971:76), what else is a person to do when s/he has an idea, but to ride it as hard as s/he can, and leave it to others to hold it back within proper limits. What is objectionable, however, is not that some aspects are pushed to the utmost, but that others, in consequence, are denied exposure (Kaplan). It is interesting to note that whilst an "unselected" example is surely a rarity in a piece of planned writing, and that "selected" examples in themselves are not dangerous, examples will appear

to have been "carefully selected and sifted" if and when alternative examples can be (easily) produced, which refute whatever argument/thesis the first set of examples is supposed to support, i.e. when the preconception/bias on the author's part is blatant, when the reader knows that s/he is being allowed a distorted view only. However, it must also be noted that the absence of examples to show "the other side of the picture" in itself does not constitute bias or preconception, as no "unselected examples" could possibly be found to refute or disprove a statement or theory which is valid.[5]

Another weakness of the third approach, according to Lefevere, is that:

Many studies of literary translation written in this vein tend . . . to degenerate into a kind of handbook, after a few illuminating chapters on more general questions. . . . A type of treatment not too different, after all, from precisely those . . . most authors of this type of study carefully denounce in their introductions. (Lefevere 1975:2-3)

This fault, too, will be difficult to avoid, especially if, as Lefevere advocates, "the writer . . . on translation should . . . be at great pains to establish what a good translation is" (Lefevere 1975:3).

The methodological problem here is analogous to that of logic which Nicholas Rescher describes in *Methodological Pragmatism* (1977:243), and stems from the fact that "translation is highly *teleological* activity; in other words, that the exertion of any single act of translating is to a large extent conditioned by the goal it serves" (Gideon Toury 1980:30,82). According to Rescher, the principles of logic, unlike those of 'descriptive' grammar (and like those of translation, it might be added), have a "*normative*" force.[6] Using Rescher's argument, and bearing in mind Lefevere's constraint, it can thus be argued that because discussions on translation must root in a teleological analysis of the presystematic

purposes of translating that is their object, they might begin with merely descriptive considerations as to how effective translating proceeds but would inevitably end with the normative. As Rescher explains, *de facto* translating efficacy is transmuted into the concept of *de jure* theoretical force. But, what must not be lost sight of is that the normative "right" and "wrong" of the theoretician's account of how translating is to be conducted, are of simply *instrumental* weight, relating to how one "ought" to translate *to achieve efficacy*.<sup>[7]</sup> Given the teleology of efficiency and effectiveness in translating, the "normative" aspect enters in through this *purposive* door. Rescher's words thus explain why it is difficult for writings on translation to avoid seeming normative, degenerating, as Lefevere observes, from general (descriptive) discussions to a kind of (normative) handbook.

But perhaps the weakness observed might have been tolerated had there been no disparity between the methodology declared and that practised. This point is raised here as it becomes increasingly obvious, in the course of the research, that this inconsistency of attitude, or outright self-contradiction through the authors' not practising what they preach, to which Lefevere rightly takes exception, seems typical of writings on translation. Ethics aside, such a state of affairs cannot possibly be beneficial to practitioners wanting to improve their performance, and is therefore to be regretted.

To the above problems are added the following. The "immensity of the body of writings on translation" (Lawendowski 1978:264-265), for example, has several implications, an obvious one being the impossibility of covering every source. Equally obvious is the impossibility of saying anything new. The

situation encountered at this point in the study is so aptly described by R. Levin as to warrant the following quotation:

considering that some of the best thinkers of the past [thirty] hundred years [or so] have applied themselves to the question, it is not likely that anything fundamentally new or original could be said about the phenomenon of [translation]. A glance at any scholarly survey of the . . . traditional will reveal that there are some half dozen basic ideas on the nature of [translation], and that the fresh insights and new theories that periodically appear turn out to be variants of these few ideas. (Levin 1976:141-160)

That the above is said of poetry does not lessen its relevance to translation, for after a survey of the literary and linguistic orientations in the history of translation theory, Mary Snell-Hornby (1988) notes that:

it is striking how repetitive some of the thinking, the concepts and the terms have been: the historical dichotomy, whether the words used are "faithful vs. free," "word vs. sense" or "source-oriented vs. target-oriented," has basically the same identity, even in the new paradigm now being developed . . . and the same principles and guidelines for a good translation have been formulated with almost identical words at least since the Renaissance. (Snell-Hornby 1988:26; emphasis added)

At this stage of the game, according to Levin, the thing to do would be:

to approach one of the basic ideas from a new direction, bring to bear on it technical or theoretical innovations that were previously unavailable, and in that way suggest some additional support for one of the ideas about [translation] that [theorists] of the past have promulgated and that the tradition has ratified. (Levin 1976:160)[8]

As well as the above, the subjecting of ideas to tests using previously unavailable (or overlooked) observable facts might also reveal flaws in hitherto acceptable notions. In which case, however painful the process, it might also become necessary, as Boguslaw Lawendowski suggests, to indicate unambiguously what notions are to be put aside. Such a step is necessary to the growth of Translation Studies as a science (Popper 1985; Ferguson 1986).[9]

The methodology adopted in this chapter is guided by the above considerations but is shaped overall by the purpose of the study, which is to compile and analyze the problems of translating Malay verse into English. Popper suggests a useful starting point:

Try to learn what people are saying nowadays in [translation]. Find out where the difficulties arise, . . . take interest in disagreements. . . . In other words . . . study the *problem situation* of the day. (Popper 1985:129)

### 3.2 THE PROBLEM SITUATION OF THE DAY

The central issues of translation and translation studies are well laid out in Susan Bassnett-McGuire's scrupulously unbiased introduction to *Translation Studies* (1980).[10] Surveys of recent literature (Snell-Hornby 1988, Newmark 1988), as well as problems experienced in the course of the research, show that although significant changes have taken place in the field rapidly, the issues raised in the book are very much alive to date. Two of the more recent studies, Mary Snell-Hornby's (1988) and Boris Hlebec's (1989), reflect that there is still a "need for a more general theoretical discussion as to the nature of translation" (Bassnett-McGuire 1980:,134).[11]

Another need which is acutely felt in writing this chapter is that of "an accessible terminology with which to engage in such discussion" (Bassnett-McGuire 1980:5,134). One great benefit to be derived from a more accessible terminology (or a suitable professional language--Alan Duff 1984), would be, as Bassnett-McGuire points out:

that we could move away from the old, vague conflict between free and literal translation, with the attendant value judgements. We could also move away from the dubious distinction between author-directed and audience-directed translation. (Bassnett-McGuire 1980:134)[12]

That this is indeed a central issue could be deduced from the fact that a notable feature of many important studies in the 1980s is the deliberate effort to move in the direction suggested. Peter Newmark (1981:38), for example, although convinced that the conflict of loyalties, the gap between emphasis on source and target language will always remain as the overriding problem in translation theory and practice, nevertheless attempts to narrow the gap by replacing previous terms which have marked the opinion swing between source-oriented and target-oriented concepts, with new terms related to the twin concepts of *communicative* and *semantic* translations. Marilyn Gaddis Rose in *Translation Spectrum* (1981) introduces the attractive concept of *spectrums*, such as the autonomy spectrum to replace the traditionally polarized representations. The issue is raised again by Joseph F. Graham (1985:Introduction).

Snell-Hornby's and Hlebec's efforts are both directed towards an integrated approach to translation studies, an approach manifest in Newmark's *A Textbook Of Translation* (1988). Snell-Hornby's and Hlebec's studies are particularly interesting. Coming when they did, they would reflect the state of the art, and would have the advantage of being able to draw upon the great theoretical innovations begun in the 1970s. A point to note: neither Hlebec nor Snell-Hornby seems to have realised that, as Bassnett-McGuire points out, the problematic of English Translation Studies is that a value system underlies the choice of term, and therefore unless a terminology is found which can be utilized in the systematic study of translation, it will be impossible not to be caught in the "connotation trap" which binds most efforts to the polarised representation of translation. This point will be taken up in detail in the section on terminology.

### 3.2.1. *Where The Difficulties Arise*

As well as these general issues, the new and anomalous traditions have also to face problems specific firstly to their being new and then to their being anomalous. Their being 'new' means that they would be affected not just by any change occurring since the laying out of the framework of traditional paradigms, which, following Nida, may be taken to go as far back as the fourth century (when Jerome wrote on the problems of translating, in relation to his translation of the Bible into Latin) but also by recent changes. The opening of the New World and the subsequent role of English is a relatively recent change which is significant in the context of the new traditions. As Randolph Quirk puts it:

The importance and the international status of English today come home to us particularly clearly when we compare the use of English in Shakespeare's time. In 1600, 'He speaks English' and 'He is English' were very close to being interdependent statements: *if the one, then the other*. English was almost unknown outside the British Isles--and by no means universally spoken within the British Isles, as Richard Mulcaster tells us in 1582: 'our English tung is of small reach, it stretcheth no further than this Iland of ours, saie not there over all'. The number of English speakers in the world when Shakespeare was writing has been estimated at five million. The increase during the intervening years to the present is quite phenomenal. There are now something like 250 million people for whom English is the mother-tongue or 'first-language': and this of course means, for the most part, their *only* language. If we add to this the number of people who have a working knowledge of English as a second or foreign language (many Indians, Africans, Frenchmen, Russians, and so on), we raise the total to about 350 million. (Quirk 1975:7-8)

The effect of this on the new traditions can be seen as follows. A consideration of the notion of Target Language (TL) as used in the last two chapters will show that although the precursors and the perpetrators shared the same *purpose* in translating, which is to make Malay works accessible to the Target Language Community (TLC), and although the TLC in both contexts appear to be single units, the composition of the speech community implied by the

term "TL" in Chapter II is in fact different from that in Chapter I. The TLC implied in Chapter I was specifically the community of British speakers of English. The TLC implied in Chapter II is, as shown, the international community, as by then English has acquired the stature of international *lingua franca*. [13] The assumption that a TLC is a homogeneous cultural entity is no longer valid, as the community now implied might be any or all of the English-speaking communities of the world; and incredible though it sounds, this new TLC might or might not include the original TLC, for as Randolph Quirk (1975:33) points out, "'England' is only one part--however important--of what 'English' denotes in the world".

The ambiguation of the TLC notion means that the homing or zooming-in (directional) effect of the target, implicit in the traditional concept of TL and TLC, is lost on translators whose TLC is so diffused and diverse as to be non-existent. TL-oriented concepts of translation cannot therefore be used by such translators, whose vision of their audience is not just impaired (Bassnett-McGuire 1980:75) but is totally lost. The problem is well discussed in Sujit Mukherjee (1981:91-92), who points out the futility of trying to cater to an unidentified readership, whilst at the same time questioning the advisability of making adaptations for "the hypothetical benefit of an imaginary reader in English". [14] The question that needs to be looked into is therefore, what 'making a text accessible/available to non speakers of the From language' would mean under the circumstances.

Other factors which might affect the new traditions are: changes in political boundaries and transmigration, and the resultant linguistic complexities (as discussed in Eugene A. Nida, 1975, in the chapter on "Communication Roles of



Languages"). As a result of the opening of the New World and of subsequent transmigration, multilingual (of two or more languages) linguistic structures, for example, become a feature of many modern societies. From Nida's discussion, it can be deduced that:

[Although n]ative speakers of major languages, e.g. English, French, German, Spanish, Russian, or Chinese, have typically a one-language structure . . . within many of the larger one-language societies, [are] minority ethnic groups that have originated through immigration and maintain a two-language structure, in which the language of their country of origin constitutes the in-group language. Examples are Spanish, German, Polish etc., in the U.S.A, and Italian, Japanese, German etc., in Brazil. These languages tend to disappear within a few generations, but the rate of disappearance depends upon many factors. [Nida then goes on to explain the factors upon which this rate of disappearance depends.] (Nida 1975:155)

The presence of ethnic sub-groups through immigration and the different rates of disappearance of their individual languages ambiguate the notions of *mother-tongue* and *native language*, as will be shown below.

This point is taken up here as it is realised that although the act of translating into a language not the translator's own is not accepted practice (on linguistic grounds) in traditional, Anglo-European notions of translating,[15] for reasons of necessity (as seen in Chapter II) it is a feature of the newer traditions.[16] The notion of who should be doing the translation, as can be seen from a statement made by Alan Duff (1984:125) in his book *The Third Language*, i.e., that "translation should be done by native speakers of the target language", is linked with the concepts of 'native speakers' and 'mother tongue'. Since it can be shown that in many modern societies the associated notions of 'native speakers', 'mother-tongue', 'first language' etc., have grown hazy (Nida 1975, Quirk 1975, Mukherjee 1981, Masani 1987), the question of who (theoretically)

should be doing the translation needs to be re-examined.

That translating into a language not the translator's own is not accepted practice, seems to be something that is tacitly assumed, for though reminders of the foolishness and/or the futility of the act periodically appear, theoretically it is mostly treated as a non-issue. Hilaire Belloc, however, treats it as something not to be taken for granted. Distinguishing between *general* rules which apply to all translation and *particular* rules which apply to translation of particular kinds, Belloc lists as the general rule that is most important and obvious, the rule:

- (1) That the translation should be into the language of the translator.

He asserts further that:

unless there is one medium which is native to [the translator] and in which he writes well, he cannot translate save into that medium. (Belloc 1931:12-14)[17]

Just how incongruous the act is deemed to be can be gathered from the case of Francis Sylvester Mahony. A Jesuit priest who left the order to be a journalist and a poet, Mahony (1804-66 in *OCEL*:607) is said to have contributed many lively papers and poems to *Fraser's Magazine* and *Bentley's Miscellany*. These, it seems, included translations from Horace, Béranger, Hugo, etc., and interspersed amongst them, most intriguingly, were "mystifications in the form of invented 'originals' in French, Latin, Greek" for well known poems by T. Moore, C. Wolfe and others. Thus it seems that the process is considered a translation if it goes in one (the traditionally-recognized) direction, and something else when it goes in the other (unsanctioned) direction. Since similar cognitive processes are involved in whichever direction the translation proceeds, such a reading of the translation process is considered to hinder understanding of the process,[18] and

cannot therefore be accepted in the spirit of the present study.

Another point to be considered is that because the act is considered anomalous, problems arising from it cannot be discussed comfortably. This again is detrimental to the attempt to understand the translation process.[19] In the hope of gaining some insight into the translation process, and not just because the practice is something that cannot be avoided, the act of translating into a language not the translator's own is considered a normal act in the terms of this study. Moreover, following Gottsched (below), the study also does not preclude the possibility of the translator translating from one language foreign to her/him, to another, also foreign to her/him, as can happen in societies with multilingual immigrants (see Chapter II).

Lefevere (1977:13) notes an exception to the general opinion concerning the matter in Gottsched, who, on linguistic grounds, allows for the possibility of translating not only from a foreign language into the translator's own, but also from one foreign language into another. He nonetheless rejects such practice on ethical grounds, as he considers it unpatriotic to love another language more than one's own. Timothy Webb notes another exception in Shelley, who:

In 1816 . . . negotiated with a publisher at Geneva on the possibility of his turning Godwin's *Political Justice* into French. In 1821 he translated portions of his own *Prometheus Unbound* into Italian . . . (Webb 1976:14)

(Of course, as Webb notes earlier (:2), Shelley was a translator of extraordinary range and versatility with a working knowledge of Greek, Latin, French, German, Italian, and Spanish, who at one time or another wrote in all these languages, but any general statement on the subject must take into account the possibility of bi- or multi-lingualism.) It is not known if Shelley carried out the translation into

French, but the fact that he did plan to do it indicates his stand.

Interesting to note, too, is the fact that, whilst, as Duff points out, "It is . . . assumed in Western Europe that all translation is--or should be--done by native speakers of the target language", in reality:

even in Western Europe, many of the translated works which reach the *largest public* (official guides, handbooks, tourist office and embassy publicity material, instruction manuals, etc.) have clearly not been translated by native speakers of English. Indeed, one might almost go so far as to say that the higher the circulation of the document the greater is the likelihood of finding deficiencies in the translation. (Duff 1984:125)

The problem of translating into a language not the translator's own thus appears to be a major and widespread problem, which, because theoretically is a non-issue, receives no proper attention.

The aspect is highlighted here as it is realised that where the act is accepted and the problem is acknowledged, "then", as Max Muller is reported to have written:

and then only, [would] the variety of human speech [and the total complexity of translation] present itself as a problem [calling] for a solution . . . (Nida 1975:192)

Such a problem was first recognized by the "very apostles who were commanded 'to go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature,' and their . . . successors, the missionaries" (Muller, as quoted in Nida 1975:192). The solution is the amassing of materials and the activities which eventually gives rise to the field of linguistics and the branch of translation studies which deals with the translation of the Bible. Nida's chapter on "Linguistics and Christian Missions" (1975:192-247) gives a comprehensive description of the simultaneous development of Linguistics, Christian Missions, and Biblical Scholarship. From Nida's account, it can be seen that the act of translating into a foreign tongue is

accepted as a matter of course. Nida reports, for example that:

In Burmese, the first western scholar to make an extensive study of the language was the American Baptist missionary Adoniram Judson. Beginning with a small dictionary and grammar made by Felix Carey (son of William Carey), Judson learned Burmese, translated the Bible into it (1835), and later prepared a Burmese grammar and dictionary which has been used both by missionaries and by other students of oriental languages. (Nida 1975:217)

Other perpetrators of the anomalous act are the "Serampore Trio" of Imperial India. The trio, made up of: "William Carey, a cobbler who was a Baptist village pastor, . . . Joshua Marshman, a school-teacher, and William Ward, a printer, . . . toiled for 30 years translating the Bible or portions of it into Bengali, Sanskrit, Marathi and ten other languages" (David Mitchell 1972:733).

Carey arrived in India in 1793 and was treated as an illegal migrant by a colonial government opposed to missionary work. Carey and his fellow-missionaries then took refuge in the Danish colony of Serampore, near Calcutta. Carey's translation of the NT into Bengali was published in 1801. With his colleagues and with the aid of Indian helpers, he directed the preparation of biblical translations in some thirty-four languages (Nida 1975:216; Masani 1987:79). Joshua Marshman prepared a Chinese grammar which proved to be useful to later scholars and missionaries, and, with John Lassar, produced a translation of the Bible in Chinese (Nida 1975:218).

That the act is being perpetuated in modern times can be gathered from the following sets of statistics:

some substantial part of the Bible has, as of 1962, been translated into 1181 languages, whose speakers constitute at least 97% of the world's population. Of these languages, the entire Bible has been translated into 226 . . . the New Testament into an additional 281, and at least one book of the Bible into another 674. (Nida 1975:192)  
At the end of 1971, at least some portion of the Holy Scripture has been

produced in 1,457 languages, with 253 languages having the entire Bible and 330 more having the New Testament. (Nida 1975:174)

From such statistics it is clear that the act of translating into a language not the translator's own is too widespread to be considered anomalous.[20]

The assumption that all translation should be done by native speakers of the target language, has implications that need looking into, as some of them have adverse effects on the new traditions. It means different things to different people: to Duff (1981), for example, it means that, in principle, there should be no such thing as grammatically defective translation; Nida (1975:168) and Newmark (1983:5), however, both observe that with non-native speakers of a language, the problem is not so much of 'incorrect' grammar--for Newmark claims that the grammar is "often copybook"--as of inappropriate 'level of style' (Nida; see also M. A. K. Halliday on 'register'). According to Nida:

Any language . . . has several distinct levels of usage. . . . [which can be thought of] in terms of five distinguishable levels of styles: formal, consultative, casual, intimate and frozen . . . (Nida 1975:175)

Nida explains that:

A native speaker of [a language] can regularly shift between these levels, and in fact is hardly aware of the existence of such differences. [But] a person who does not speak [the language] as his own mother tongue and has learned only one of the levels becomes immediately conspicuous when he tries to communicate in an area for which his linguistic experience has not prepared him. For example, many students from India studying in the United States have mastered a form of English which is distinctly "bookish". Though such students are quite competent in the area of technical or formal speech, their attempts at casual or informal use of English quickly betray their background. (Nida 1975:168)

Nida's analysis is interesting both from the point of view of the pedagogy of translation (which will be taken up again later), and from that of foreign language acquisition. It also shows that it would be more fruitful for this study

to assume that the translator is someone proficient in the languages into which and from which s/he translates, no matter what her/his mother-tongue is. That evidence (on the basis of published translations as seen in section 2.4) might show this to be too optimistic an assumption is another matter; the problem of translators not proficient in the language they translate into (or from) is a major problem for the new traditions (Mukherjee) but must be seen as an issue separate from that of the impropriety of translating into a language not the translator's own.

The long-standing assumption about the propriety of translating only into the language which is the translator's own draws attention away from issues such as that which Newmark notes, i.e., that translationese can be both 'native' and 'foreign':

The 'foreign' translator has not got the command of the target language; the 'native' translator is inexperienced and is unaware that interference from the source or a third language may go beyond a few conventional *faux amis* . . . (Newmark 1983:6)[21]

From Newmark's observation, it can be deduced that *who* does the translating affects the translation product, just as much as *why* a certain translation is carried out.[22] By making no unwarranted assumptions about the translator, other than the basic ones such as that s/he is proficient in the language s/he translates from and into, and that s/he shows an aptitude for translation, the *who*-factor of translation can be introduced as a variable of the translation process, and its effects on the translation product can then be studied alongside those of other variables.[23]

A further objection to Duff's earlier statement (i.e., that "translation should be done by native speakers of the target language") is that, if taken at face value,

such a statement can (too easily) be misconstrued. In traditions of translating into English (for example), such a statement is partially true only for situations where, as Quirk puts it, the statements "'He speaks English' and 'He is English' [are] very close to being interdependent statements". The qualifier 'partially' is inserted here as it is realised that implicit in the statement is the assumption that the 'native speaker' also has an aptitude for translating as well as a superb mastery of his native tongue.[24] Since native speakers of English who are *also* talented translators *and* interested in translating from Third World languages are becoming a rarity (Mukherjee), statements like the above might easily be (mis)construed as a license allowing just anybody to translate, as long as s/he is a native speaker of the target language. This point is stressed here as it is obvious from even the most cursory survey of Anglo-Malay translation that the misapprehension not only prevails but is widespread. One obvious and easily traceable example is the translation, carried out by native speakers of Malay, of portions of *The Reader's Digest* into Malay, in the short-lived bilingual section of the Asian edition in 1980. The result shows that the job must have been undertaken by native speakers of Malay who knew both English and Malay and who were deluded by just such a misapprehension.

To avoid making either *pseudo-* or *false* generalizations (cf. note [5]), the complexities and ambiguities surrounding the notions 'native speakers' and 'mother-tongue' must not be lost sight of. Taking the case of, for example, speakers of English, first, there are those who are native speakers of English (by birth), but for whom English is a second language. One such case is T. Carmi, the Israeli poet. Carmi was born in New York City, in 1925, into a family who



spoke only Hebrew at home. However fluent his English became (he left America in 1946 for Paris before emigrating to Israel in 1947), his first language is Hebrew (Grace Schulman 1989).

Then there are those who are not native speakers of English by birth, but for whom English is the first language. Belloc is one example, and Michael Hamburger, who was born in Berlin in 1924, of a German family which emigrated to England in 1933 (OCEL:429), is another. German is Hamburger's "mother language" (Honig 1985:168-169), but one which he partly lost when growing up in England. According to Hamburger, after the age of nine and for a long time he never spoke any German, and because his German was a child's German (which he admits is "pretty rudimentary"), he had to learn it again at school, and then at Oxford.

W. Somerset Maugham is a unique case. Born on 25 January 1874 at the British Embassy in Paris, his 'mother-tongue' was French. He lost his mother at the age of eight and his father about two years later. At this stage, when he was to be sent to relatives in England, he:

spoke little English . . . and he had hurriedly to be coached in the language--a crash course indeed--by an English clergyman who was attached to the Embassy. (Raphael 1976:10)

George Steiner in *After Babel*, admits to having no recollection whatever of a first language:

So far as I am aware, I possess equal currency in English, French, and German. What I can speak, write, or read of other languages has come later and retains a feel of conscious acquisition. But I experience my first three tongues as perfectly equivalent centres of myself. I speak and I write them with indistinguishable ease. (Steiner 1977:115)

And that is not all, for:

Even these three 'mother tongues' were only part of the linguistic spectrum in my early life. Strong particles of Czech and Austrian-Yiddish continued active in my father's idiom. And beyond these, like a familiar echo of a voice just out of hearing, lay Hebrew. (Steiner 1977:116)

Steiner's is apparently not an isolated case, for according to him:

My natural condition was a polyglot, as is that of children in the Val d'Aosta, in the Basque country, in parts of Flanders, or Spanish in Paraguay . . . (Steiner 1977:15)

Then there is the case of anglicized Indians, as discussed in Mukherjee and Masani. Masani (1987:154), for example, remarks on the emergence in the post-independence period in India, of a new generation of Indian writers, labelled 'Indo-Anglians', "for whom English is a mother-tongue, if only by adoption". He also reports that in the colonial period, in certain English-medium school, such as Bombay's Cathedral School, the only language spoken is English. The confusion that arises from the use of the now ambiguous term 'mother-tongue' can be seen when, for example, Hamburger's case is compared to that of Romesh Thapar and Khushwant Singh, both of whom were educated in English-style schools of Imperial India (Masani 1987:86). Both Indians admit to a sense of loss about the extent to which they were cut off from their cultural roots. The emphasis on English throughout their schooldays and an English university education means that these "children of colonialism" (Thapar) were cut off from their mother tongues even longer than Hamburger was: for whilst Hamburger was able to learn German at school and at university, Khushwant Singh, for example, could relearn Punjabi and Urdu, his mother tongues, only after returning from England. Both Indians are prominent English-language journalists, more at home with English than with their mother tongues, but cannot be considered 'natives' of English, whilst to all intents and purposes, Hamburger is a native speaker of English (see

also Hamburger in Weissbort 1989).

Inconsistencies such as these, and the possibility of multilingualism (see Steiner's case above), show that it might prove relatively more accurate, as Newmark points out, to use the phrase "language of habitual use" which was coined by Anthony Crane, in place of phrases such as 'mother-tongue', 'native-language' etc., as the language into which a translator would be expected to translate. The phrase is accurate, but not, however, for the reason that Newmark seems to suggest in his argument for it. According to Newmark:

the phrase 'language of habitual use' is accurate; terms such as 'mother tongue', 'native speaker' 'native language' etc., lead to a suspicion of racialism. (Newmark 1983:5)

To say that the coined phrase is "accurate" because the previous alternatives it seeks to replace "lead to a suspicion of racialism" is to detract from its due, as well as to divert the issue. The support for the phrase, as is the objection to Duff's statement, ought to come not from an aversion to anything with a hint of racialism (which is another issue altogether), but, as above, from a desire to be accurate. Merely to replace the old terms with the new does nothing but reinforce old prejudices; compare, for example, Duff's statement with Newmark's:

*Duff*: ideally, translation should be done by native speakers of the target language. (Duff 1984:125)

*Newmark*: The worst translationese is perpetrated by writers translating out of their language of habitual use. (Newmark 1983:5; emphasis added)

The presumably euphemistic use of the phrase 'language of habitual use' here does not hide the fact that Newmark's statement is essentially reinforcing Duff's sentiment. That this is indeed so can be gathered from the discussion that ensues from it, which culminates with a concrete illustration from Duff. Newmark's

choice of observational data, however, proves unfortunate; he explains his choice as follows:

Since Alan Duff has written a book about the misuse of this 'third language' (sometimes referred to as 'interlanguage' by applied linguists ...), I quote one of his examples ... [which] presumably [reflects] ex-Portuguese English ... (Newmark 1983:5; emphasis added)

What is interesting here is that the tacit assumption that the worst translationese is perpetrated by writers translating out of their language of habitual use (which is the corollary to the assumption that translation should be done by native speakers of the target language), has led Newmark to assume that all examples in the book are translations by this category of translators. Early in the book, however, Duff explains his selection of the materials thus:

Although I am aware that not all passages have been translated by native English translators, I have wherever possible checked to see if the editorial board included English speakers. In other cases, when the overall quality of the publication was sufficiently high, I have felt it fair to assume that the translations ought to have been checked by a native speaker. On the whole, however, I have deliberately avoided using examples which clearly have not been translated by a native speaker ... (Duff 1984:xii)

and reiterates his stand with the following anecdote:

When I asked people in France and England for comments on the first draft of this book, I several times heard the comment: 'Is it fair to judge work that has not been translated by native speakers of English?' The question seemed reasonable, as I had indeed included examples of such translations ... Such examples [i.e. of work that has not been translated or checked by native speakers of English] are therefore removed. (Duff 1984:125; emphasis added)

There is, therefore, an element of doubt: the example which Newmark cites might/might not have been translated by a translator whose language of habitual use is not English. What is unfortunate about Newmark's assertions is that they divert attention from the interesting point that he makes (quoted earlier), which is that translationese can be both 'native' and 'foreign'.

The approach adopted here is greatly influenced by Quirk's discussion on the social complications of language usage. Although the complications Quirk discusses are those found among native speakers of English, it is apparent that parallel complications exist for practitioners of the new tradition. The realisation that "no language involves more far-reaching social complications than English" (Quirk 1975:70) and that such realisation affords little comfort to those who are "uncomfortably stilted on linguistic high-heels" (Quirk 1975:75), for example, strikes a familiar chord with practitioners of the new tradition, who are not native speakers of English.

Regarding the social aspects of language, Quirk suggests that:

... English [native] speakers fall into three categories: the *assured*, the *anxious*, and the *indifferent*. At one end of the scale, we have the people who have 'position' and 'status', and who therefore do not feel they need worry much about their use of English. ... [Confident] of speaking an unimpeachable form of English [,] no fear of being criticized or corrected is likely to cross their minds ... (Quirk 1975:74)

An analogous categorization of the practitioners of any tradition of translation would put all native speakers of the target language amongst the assured, since it is tacitly assumed that ideally *they* should be doing such translation. Quirk's observation that no fear of being criticized or corrected is likely to cross the minds of this group would explain the attitude towards translation criticism which can be gathered from Newman's famous reply to Matthew Arnold, and from records of correspondence as recorded in Raffel's (1971) *The Forked Tongue* (see also Weissbort 1989).

Adapting Quirk's argument for the translation situation, at the other end of the scale:

we have an equally imperturbable band, [translating] with a similar degree

of careless ease, because even if they are aware that their [effort] . . . is condemned by others, they are supremely *indifferent* to the fact. . . . and if we happen not to like their way of [putting] things, well, we 'can lump it'. That is their attitude. (Quirk 1975:74-75)

Mukherjee (cf. note [2] for Prologue) provides a concrete expression of such indifference in the Indo-English tradition of translation. What should be noted is that, as can be gathered from mistranslations observed in restaurant menus (Duff 1984:125), packagings, film subtitles and instruction manuals and the like, every tradition of translation has its share of the indifferent as described above. They are those who, as Newmark (1988:3) remarks, "contribute greatly to many people's hilarity". But, contrary to Newmark's belief (i.e., that such howlers are produced by non-native speakers of the target language), it is claimed here that these mistranslations could have been produced by anybody. Anyone, whether translating into or out of her/his language of habitual use, could slip on the insidious, proverbial banana peel, as discussed in Robert M. Adams (1973:14), and as can be seen from the following examples.

The first example is extracted from a translation of A. Latiff Mohidin's poem by Muhammad Haji Salleh (1985:47), where the line:

*/ulat air di dadaku tak bergerak/*

is translated as:

*/over my breastwater [sic] caterpillar are still/*

Muhammad's not quite literal translation of */ulat air/* as */water caterpillar/* is incorrect. There is no such creature as a */water caterpillar/*; in Malay, */ulat/* is a general term for "creepy crawlies", and does not refer to */caterpillar/* specifically; */caterpillar/* is */ulat buluh/*. */Ulat air/* refers to */pond skaters/* to some, and to the tiny insects which swim in water to others. Muhammad's translation has

destroyed the imagery. He has turned a simple creature into a surreal monster, and in the process, has lost the poignancy of the moment described: i.e. when the normally skittish, (long-legged or otherwise) insects are still. This is an obvious case for advocating translation into the translator's own tongue.

However, it is argued here that a mistranslation producing an equally absurd distortion can occur even when the translator is translating into his own tongue. Raffel (1971:20), for example, translates the lines:

<i>/Anjing tanah menggelepar memekikkan berahi kepajang/</i>	as: /A cricket flutters about, shrilling a love song to the net./
--	--

The translation of */berahi kepajang/* into */a love song to the net/* is not correct.

Raffel explains his translation as follows:

what is the cricket shrilling? Love, *berahi*, and its love-shrills are directed to the net. Net is *pajang*, and the prefix *ke-*, attached to the base, indicates direction. (Raffel 1971:21)

The mistake is in identifying */ke-/* as a prefix [25] */Kepajang/* is one word, which, according to Asim Gunarwan (in Noor Ein and Atiah, eds., 1991:52):

is a borrowing from Javanese meaning "extremely" or "utterly", which can be found for instance in a phrase such as *mabuk kepayang* ("utterly drunk") or *rindu kepayang* ("madly longing for"). (Gunarwan 1991:52)

The imagery in the two lines are connected: with */menggelepar/* in the first line indicating an acutely agitated state, like that of a fish (literally!) out of water, and */berahi kepajang/* in the second indicating */consumed with passion/*, the image is that of a creature thrashing about with unfulfilled desire, shrieking its frustration. This makes of */shrilling a love song to the net/* a pale mockery of the source.

Raffel's mistake is similar to that of Muhammad's, in that it arises from

a lapse in vocabulary and/or comprehension (in both the To- and the From-languages in Muhammad's case, and in the From-language in Raffel's). What must be noted here is that Muhammad's mistake can be detected—he is translating out of his own language, and his accuracy is therefore suspect—but Raffel's is not. (Effective) collaboration, as suggested by Rose (1981) and Newmark (1983), is obviously to be preferred (see 2.4 for 'unhappy' collaboration).

To get back to Quirk's categories of language users, of greatest interest to this study is the in-between group, the group of the anxious. According to Quirk:

These actively try to suppress what they believe to be bad English and assiduously cultivate what they hope to be good English. They live their lives . . . in some degree of nervousness over their grammar . . . and their choice of words; sensitive and fearful of betraying themselves. (Quirk 1975:75)

Translators who are aware of the difficulties in translating would naturally be anxious about making the right choices; but those translating out of their native tongue, and aware that such an act is frowned upon, would be more likely to fall under the category of the anxious, as described above. As in the case of anxious native speakers of English, and as Quirk surmises, "[t]he people thus uncomfortably stilted on linguistic high-heels" so often come from the section of the tense and inner-driven of any society. In the case of translators, they would most likely make up the majority of 'serious' translators, i.e., translators of literary works. As assumed earlier, they would be anxious to do what they feel is the right thing, and so, as Quirk remarks, the greater is the pity if a disproportionate amount of their energy goes into an obsession with variant forms of English.



"especially if the net result is (as so often) merely to sound affected and ridiculous" (see Nida 1975 and Newmark 1983).

Three observations, one made by Marilyn Gaddis Rose (1981), another by Karla Dejean Le Féal (1987) and the third by Robert F. Terwilliger (1968), tend to support Quirk's suggestion that in studying the use of English (or any language, for that matter), the aim must be not to increase the number of the 'anxious' but the number of the 'assured'. Rose (1981) claims that "bad translations usually result when a translator is merely translating words", especially if this is due to the translator's not understanding what it is that s/he is translating. But it is maintained here that, in an effort to be faithful to the original, even the translator who understands might still be guilty of word-for-word translation; and this is the case of interest here. Le Féal touches the heart of the matter when she brings up the paradox that "acute awareness of the original wording, substa<sup>n</sup>ed [sic] by a continual perception of this wording . . . is highly detrimental" to the effort to produce natural (Newmark) or dynamic (Nida), i.e., unstilted, equivalents in the To-language. The explanation for this apparent paradox may be deduced from Terwilliger's observation. According to Terwilliger:

Thinking must involve the excitation of tendencies to respond as does any mental process. Thus if one consciously thinks of or about a word, one must be arousing various tendencies to respond to it. Any thinking to verbal stimuli at least maintains, and even raises, the number of response tendencies associated to the word. Thinking, therefore, raises the response ambiguity which the word has and increases its meaning. Thinking, of nearly any sort whatsoever, maintains meaning. Even though meaning may quickly become something other than the consensually valid meaning of the rest of the language community, it is meaning nevertheless. (Terwilliger 1968:312-313)

This would explain why it is so easy to slip, and why, as in tight-rope walking, the more careful/hesitant the step, the more likely the fall. Terwilliger's words

would point to Heisenberg's principle being at work here, i.e., that in a close scrutiny of something, the observation, the observer or the instrument used for the observation can, too easily, perturb the thing/process observed. In language usage, according to psychiatrist Harry Stack Sullivan (as reported in Terwilliger 1968:227-228), abnormal conditions, particularly those of heightened anxiety could cause a return or a regression to a more immature level of language experience (competence). Concentrating on words in an over-anxious manner might therefore do untold damage to the translation being carried out; there is thus a case for trying to make the anxious more relaxed in their approach, as Quirk suggests.

But, there is also the danger that in the process, the *assured* group of any tradition might be turned into the *overconfident*--as can be gathered from the following example--but it is a risk that must be taken. The line:

/Dibawah bajangan samar istana kedjang/

from Toto Sudarto Bachtiar's poem *Ibukota Senda* has been translated by Derwent May as:

/In reflections of the palace seized by cramp/

Raffel rightly points out that:

*Dibawah* means more "under". *Bajangan* = shadows . . . *Samar* = dim, vague, indistinct, obscure. And then, crucially, *istana kedjang* = stiff, unbending palace. Now, the idea of convulsions, cramps, is not simply dragged in; *kedjang* can mean this too, admittedly. But in context I think your version improbable. The line might read, as I see it: "Under the dim shadow of the great, stiff palace". . . .

I think this reading of mine becomes more probable still (how does a palace get seized by cramps? . . . (Raffel 1971:80-81)

Unfortunately, the translator, confident because he is translating into his native language, prefers his own grotesque interpretation, and yet another howler joins the rank of "millions" (Newmark 1988:3).[26]

Masani (1987:19-20), whilst describing how the language barrier was bridged in British Indian courts of Imperial India, provides a final example. His quotation of H. M. Seervai's anecdote serves to emphasize that it is just as important to know the From-language (Adams 1973) as it is the To-language, and that even top-class translators translating into their own language can make mistakes:

For example, one of the judges asked the interpreter to tell the witness not to tell unnecessary lies. And the interpreter said: 'Tell lies only when it is necessary.' (Masani 1987:20)

Quirk's discussion shows that it would be more fruitful for this study to concentrate on the problems of the anxious group. For a start, it is noted that, anxiety, as Quirk points out, cannot be alleviated by ignoring the presence of problems, but rather by studying how the problems, if any, could be overcome. In Quirk's words:

A developed and mature awareness of [the problems of translating,] of the language and how it works . . . is the surest protection against the malaise of 'anxiety' on the one hand and against the vacuity of 'indifference' on the other. (Quirk 1975:76)

Problems such as these, as well as Bassnett-McGuire's warning as to the dangers of using heavily connotated terms, have led to the following precautionary measures. Firstly, for the sake of maintaining objectivity, it is considered safer to adopt, after Nabokov (in Adams 1973:11), the terms *To-Language* (or ToL, to differentiate it from TL which is Target Language in traditional notation, which it replaces), and *From-Language* (or FroL, which replaces the phrase Source Language or SL.[27] It is also assumed that since translations are ideally carried out by bi- or multi-linguals, translators are henceforth assumed to be bi- or multi-lingual, and the problems are those likely to be encountered by such

individuals. The above discussions also point to the need for a theoretical niche, in which the young tradition could look forward to a healthy growth. The search for a niche will thus be the purpose of the next phase of the research.

### 3.3 WEIGHING THE OPTIONS

The search for a theoretical niche would naturally centre on more recent studies. The move "Toward Descriptive Translation Studies", in Toury's *In Search Of A Theory Of Translation* (1980), seems promising, if, as declared:

a descriptive branch is devised to take interest in *everything* that has been produced, or even in anything that *can* be produced. [For] . . . translations and translation practices are *observational* facts, phenomena which have actual existence "in the world," irrespective of any prior theoretical consideration. . . . It is the need to account for the empirical phenomena and the circumstances and conditions in which they come into being which requires the establishment of a descriptive branch in a discipline such as translation studies (and cf. Holmes, 1972:9-100). (Toury 1980:80)

Earlier, Itamar Even-Zohar makes similar claims for the Polysystem (PS) approach, stating that:

The PS hypothesis . . . is designed precisely for such cases [as when a society possesses two literatures and one is ignored for convenience] as well as with the less conspicuous ones. Thus, not only does it make *possible* the integration into . . . research of objects (properties, phenomena) previously unnoticed or bluntly rejected, but also such an integration becomes a *precondition*, a *sine qua non*, for an adequate understanding of any . . . field. Thus, standard language cannot be accounted for without the non-standard varieties; . . .

Further, it may seem trivial yet warrants special emphasis that the polysystem hypothesis involves a rejection of value judgments as criteria for an *a priori* selection of the objects of study. (Even-Zohar 1979:292)

In such cases, Rescher notes that:

the nature of the observed presystematic practice is descriptive: the systematization must, on pain of inadequacy, conform to it. The empirical aspects of the presystematic practice are taken as altogether determinate for the systematization. (Rescher 1977:243; emphasis added)

On closer inspection, however, the proposed descriptive theories,

regrettably, are of limited applicability. The object of the approach is:

to supply a theoretical framework as well as operative tools **not for the study of translations in isolations** (as mere representations of the general category of "literary translation"), but for a descriptive study of translated texts and corpora of texts in their environment . . . (Toury 1980:43; emphasis added)

Toury adds further that:

When one's purpose is the descriptive study of literary translations in their environment, the initial question is not whether a certain text is a translation (according to some preconceived criteria which are extrinsic to the system under study), but whether it is *regarded* as a translation from the intrinsic point of view of the target literary polysystem, i.e. according to its position within the polysystem. (Toury 1980:43)

and reinforces Itamar Even-Zohar's statement that:

Since the PS [polysystem] is a dynamic whole, a multi-leveled system, it is analytically productive to consider its "facts" (from the point of view of actualized entities-products/texts) **only if their various (cor)relations with each other can be demonstrated.** (Even-Zohar 1979:304; emphasis added)

Thus, unless the translated texts can be demonstrated to have been absorbed into the target polysystem, there is no point in treating them as "facts" of a polysystematic study. The method can therefore be applied only to "accepted" translated texts such as those of the Hindu-Malay and Arabic-Malay traditions in the Malay context, or those of the Greek-English, Latin-English traditions of translation, and, in the case of less ancient traditions, those of "international" authors (Newmark's terminology), but would be of doubtful applicability to the study of works by unknown authors, even in established traditions.[28]

Although the theory cannot be applied to the tradition being studied (as translated Malay verse is not a 'fact' of the English literary system),[29] it is

applicable to the Malay-French tradition, where Victor Hugo's mention of the Malay *pantun* has earned it a place (albeit miniscule) in the polysystem; François-René Daillie (1988), in the book *Alam Pantun Melayu: Studies on the Malay Pantun*, discusses its fate in the French polysystem after "its introduction into French XIXth century poetry under the adulterated name and in the erroneous form of the 'pantoum'", (see also Appendix B).

The above consideration, together with the following excerpt from Leo Frobenius's "Paideuma", provides a short cut in the search for a suitable theory:

There are two main ways of apprehending reality, which may be called the mechanistic and the intuitive. The former seeks to establish laws as a means of understanding the processes and phenomena of the external world and of human consciousness. The strength of this method lies in its power to elicit such laws; its weakness is that it cannot avoid setting up an unnatural opposition between the norm and the abnormal, the regular and the irregular, the rule and the exception. Whatever diverges from the law is treated as second-class reality, so that the observer loses his power of comprehensive and impartial judgement. The mechanistic principle is, like a railroad track, the shortest means of reaching a given end, but it prevents us from taking a broad survey of the country as we pass through it.

The intuitive approach, on the other hand, is based on the conception of structure. It is content to perceive the main phenomena and assign to them, as sympathetically as possible, a place in the general structure. In this way the intuitive observer can, with full understanding, enter into all the vicissitudes of reality. (Frobenius in Rothenberg & Rothenberg, 1983:36)

It is interesting to note that Tourny is similarly inclined towards the intuitive approach, about which he remarks:

methodologically, a theory capable of explicating existing intuitions and presystematic insights is to be preferred to a theory which ignores them  
... (Tourny 1980:92)

But there the similarity ends: each has a different concept of what the intuitive approach is. Tourny sees in it:

A possibility of describing fully and systematically all the relationships

that may possibly obtain between TT and ST (in full or in part), in one and the same theoretical frame of reference, hence by means of one set of terms, may enable us to explicate and discern between notions such as "literal translation," "interlinear translation," "word-for-word translation," "paraphrastic translation," "adaptation," "a reproduction of the 'spirit' of the original," or "addition," "omission," and "mistranslation," . . . (Toury 1980:92)

This, according to Frobenius is typical not of the intuitive but of the mechanistic view, for:

In the mechanistic view the world consists of a system of facts which can be analysed into cause and effect, elements and combinations, and from which it is possible to deduce relationships . . . It is a type of . . . approach based on . . . laws of association . . . all duly classified and reduced to dry formulae. (Frobenius 1983:37)

From these considerations, it is obvious that new traditions, such as those of translating from LLD into a major language, must look toward a schema in which they might, in Frobenius' words, find "a place in the general structure". An essential feature of such a schema would be that: There is always room for the unexpected (Sidney Monas in Arrowsmith and Shattuck 1961:107). Such a schema can only arise from a definition of translation which is able to explain and predict observational data ("definition", as discussed in Mander, Upton, Thouless and Flew). The adoption of such a schema means that "essentialist questions ([such as] how is translation to be defined?, is translation actually possible?, what is a 'good' translation?)" will arise naturally and will have to be dealt with in spite of Theo Hermans' (1985a:9) reminder of their "unproductive" nature.

### **3.3.1 Definition And The Terminological Problem**

The definition of translation is well-discussed in several books (Kelly 1979:34-67; Catford 1965:20-34, etc.), but the issue is far from being resolved. Consider, for example, the classification of the types of translation. Roman

Jakobson (as discussed in Bassnett-McGuire 1980:14-15) distinguishes three types of translation: (1) intralingual translation or *rewording* (involving the one language); (2) interlingual translation or *translation proper* (involving two different languages); and (3) intersemiotic translation or *transmutation* (involving verbal signs and non-verbal signs). Although Kelly (1979:34) notes that other "Modern linguists, among them . . . J. C. Catford," make the same classification, it is by no means universally accepted. Newmark (1981:40), for example, refutes the classification with the observation: "a translation is always closer to the original than any intralingual rendering or paraphrase misnamed 'translation' by George Steiner (1975)". Such controversy proves that as James S. Holmes (1978:70) notes, an adequate model of the translation process must be developed first before it can be hoped that relevant methods for the description of translation products will be found. It also emphasises the truth of Roland Barthes' words, that:

the main problem of modern epistemology is complexity. Whether in science, in economics, in linguistics, in sociology, the present task is less to be sure of the main principles than to be able to describe imbrications . . . paradoxes . . . (Barthes in Blonsky 1985:102)

Efforts to develop a model for translation seem to have been thwarted by the difficulty in defining /translation/. Throughout this century (see T. Warren 1909, Amos 1920, Kelly 1979 and Hlebec 1989), for example, the question, "what is translation?" has been asked periodically, and judging by the nature and scope of Hlebec's work, has yet to be answered satisfactorily. Here, more than anywhere else, meaning and uncertainty seem to be mutual phenomena (Terwilliger) and *knowing* (Michel de Certeau in Blonsky 1985:126) seems to be



a far cry from *being able to articulate*; and the truth of Terwilliger's (1968:165) words that, a word is "a horribly elusive creature" which defies "pigeonholing", is brought home forcefully.

The presence of terminological "squabbling" (Lefevere) or "debate" (Bassnett-McGuire), as above, points to the absence of a *language of translation*, (i.e., a descriptive language of translation).[30] It points to the urgent need to compile a more extensive *professional language/vocabulary* for Translation Studies, such as that advanced by Anton Popovic (1976) in the *Dictionary for the Analysis of Literary Translation*, a need that is focussed upon repeatedly in Bassnett-McGuire (1980). It suggests the presence of jargon instead of well-defined professional/technical terms: for jargon is vogueish, whereas well-defined professional/technical terms endure. To overcome a common aversion to neologism (see Lefevere earlier), the difference between professional language and jargon must be made clear, for as Duff explains:[31]

Professional language and jargon are easily confused. Indeed, one will often hear the expression 'professional jargon', which suggests that there is no difference between the two. But there is a difference. Every profession has a specialized language which is readily understood by members of the profession, but not by general public. The purpose of this language, however, is not to exclude the outsider but to make communication on professional matters more precise. When, for instance, the sociologist speaks of an actor or the linguist of an agent, he is using the word in a specific and clearly defined sense. He knows that by colleagues he will not be misunderstood. (Duff 1984:98)

Like Lefevere, Duff is equally intolerant of jargon:

Jargon is to professional language what sentimentality is to sentiment: a decadent form. While professional language may be difficult to understand, it is obscure only to the non-professional, to the outsider; jargon is obscure to everyone. (Duff 1984:98-99)

Antony Flew puts in the timely reminder that, despite the urgent need for an adequate technical vocabulary, it is just as important to remember that:[32]

there is no call to try to define every term . . . [for t]o demand either a definition or any other kind of explanation where there is no relevant confusion or uncertainty to be removed is tiresome and obstructive. (Flew 1975:74)

A definition or other explication is thus needed only where there already is, or where there may reasonably be expected that there will be some relevant confusion or uncertainty about meaning (Flew), as there undoubtedly is with regards to what the translation process means.

Joseph F. Graham (1985:Introduction) raises further questions on the issue. The problem of defining and describing the translation process, for example, is framed thus:

Given that much diversity of usage about translation, we may well wonder about its real unity. If and when it is possible to say so many different things about translation, how can we ever know that we are all talking about one and the same thing? We may well ask whether the differences correspond to different aspects of the same operation or rather to some aspect shared by different operations. Surely objects can be similar without being the same, just as they can be diverse in aspect without being distinct. Or we may simply ask what advantage we might derive from changing the way we talk and think about translation. (Graham 1985:21-22)

He also makes several points which are worth examining: some of interest in that they allow a more objective approach to the controversy, others because they pin down important issues which so far have not been treated as serious problems. The following, for example, might well revise the use of language in translation discourse:

If our use of language is to serve some purpose, we should know what purpose is served by any given usage as against some other. Presumably it is no better to expand than to contract the meaning of a word in principle, but only better or worse in practice for some specific reason. If

so, there can be no general answer to such questions. *Each case for revision has to be urged on its own grounds and judged on its own merits.* We can hardly know just what translation is or even know what to say and think on the matter without considering the evidence in detail. (Graham 1985:22)

There remains, according to Graham, at least one related question that has general significance as well as practical consequence:

it concerns the possibility or feasibility of arguing with reason, and adjudicating on principle, such cases of dispute about the reference or use of basic terms like those of language, meaning, and translation. The differences often seem so great as to defy mediation. (Graham 1985:22)

As illustration, he relates the following:

Recent debate about Derrida and deconstruction in America has been characterized by acute if not complete disagreement on fundamental issues, resulting in more confrontation than real discussion, satisfaction, or resolution. At times it has almost seemed as if there were no common language or no means of translation from one language to another--and therefore no way of knowing whether the parties to the dispute really understood each other because there was no way of knowing whether they were in fact talking about the same things even when they use the same words. In that confusion of tongues, we need a theory of language to explain the possibility of serious discussion beyond such differences and so to encourage its pursuit. (Graham 1985:22)

Several instances of possible sources of misunderstanding have been encountered in the course of this research, so that perhaps it might prove timely if a couple of these are brought out at this juncture. First, there is the use of the terms /word-for-word/ and /sense-for-sense/ (Lefevere 1975, Bassnett-McGuire 1980, Hoskins 1985). According to Bassnett-McGuire:

Both Horace and Cicero, in their remarks on translation, make an important distinction between *word for word* translation and *sense for sense* . . . translation. . . . The art of the translator, for Horace and Cicero, consisted in judicious interpretation of the SL text so as to produce a TL version based on the principle *non verbum de verbo, sed sensum exprimere de sensu* (of expressing not word for word but sense for sense) . . . (Bassnett-McGuire 1980:43-44)

Common usage tends to follow Horace and Cicero. It is thus confusing when

Lefevere comes up with the following statements:

Surely, if one translates word for word, that is, matches sense with sense, there should, if translation can be based on the principle of sense equivalence, be no need for footnotes? . . . The search for a sense equivalent very often leads literal translators to disregard the communicative value of a certain word in the source language altogether. (Lefevere 1975:27-29; emphasis added)

The above is confusing on two counts: firstly, it seems that Lefevere makes no distinction between the matching of /word for word/ and /sense with sense/, as a result of which, secondly, literal translators are associated with the search for equivalence. Common usage on the other hand interpret /literal/ translators to mean /word for word/ translators (Adams 1979)--or translators in the (Nidaean) Formal mode--as opposed to translators who attempt to convey the sense equivalence.

The second ambiguity leads on to another, i.e., in the interpretation of the word /semantic/. Lefevere (1975:26) distinguishes between, "what Leech calls the 'sense' of a word, that is, roughly, its 'conceptual meaning', and its 'communicative value' . . ." (presumably the word /sense/ here applies to what Frawley, 1984, refers to as the /semantic essence/). Newmark also appears to be making a similar distinction when he proposes replacing previous terms such as /faithful/ and /idiomatic/ translation with /semantic/ and /communicative/ translation respectively, and gives by way of explanation:

Communicative translation attempts to produce on its readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original. Semantic translation attempts to render, as closely as the semantic and syntactic structures of the second language allow, the exact contextual meaning of the original. (Newmark 1981:39)

An interesting point to note here is that whereas it would seem from the above that semantic translation would allow "the exact contextual meaning of the

original" across. Newmark makes the following comment, which indicates otherwise and ambiguates the whole notion of /semantic/ translation:

I am assuming that whilst a semantic translation is always inferior to its original, since it involves loss of meaning, a communicative translation may be better, since it may gain in force and clarity what it loses in semantic content. (Newmark 1981:42)

In his discussion of their differences, Newmark points out that:

One basic difference between the two methods is that where there is a conflict, the communicative must emphasize the 'force' rather than the content of the message. Thus for *Bissiger Hund* or *Chien méchant*, the communicative translation *Beware of the dog!* is mandatory; the semantic translations ('dog that bites', 'savage dog') would be more informative but less effective. (Newmark 1981:39)

It would appear here that /semantic/ translation is really /word for word/, or /sense for sense/ translation, as in Lefevere's usage; but the following remark implies that this is not the case:

However, in communicative as in semantic translation, provided that equivalent-effect is secured, the literal word-for-word translation is not only the best, it is the only method of translation. (Newmark 1981:39)

William Frawley adds to the confusion with the following statements:

an interlingual translation is nothing at all like "taking the semantic essence of a text" and maintaining that "semantic essence" in another language. For one thing, that "semantic essence" is only a small bit of the total information available . . . ; any interlingual translation that seeks to transfer only semantics has lost before it has begun. (Frawley 1984:168)

This is so obviously a false generalization: Frawley does not take into account the case of interlingual translation of, for example, technical texts (whether it be in the natural/physical or the human sciences) or legal or diplomatic missives, where "semantic essence" must necessarily be the prime consideration; note for example the item recorded in a footnote in Lincoln Barnett's book *The Treasure Of Our Tongue*:

There is evidence that an error in translation of a message sent by the Japanese government in the closing hours of World War II might have been responsible for the holocaust of Hiroshima. Had the translator rendered one word differently, the atomic bomb might never have been released. The word *mokusatsu*, used by the Japanese Cabinet in their reply to the Potsdam surrender ultimatum, was given out by the Domei news agency as "ignore" rather than correctly, as "withholding comment [pending decision]". Unaware that the Japanese were still considering the ultimatum, believing indeed that it had been rejected, the Allies proceeded to open the atomic age. (Barnett 1966:226)

The translation of the Bible, which involves the most intricate of literary translating processes, is another example that surely could not have been included in Frawley's generalization. For there, more than elsewhere, the "taking" and "maintaining" of the "semantic essence" (i.e. the 'exact contextual meaning', after Newmark) must necessarily be a prime consideration. But perhaps Frawley's words have been misinterpreted; perhaps the phrase "semantic essence" means something else.

Robert J. Matthews, according to Graham, by suggesting the conditions that are necessary to sustain and so to continue the discussion of translation, offers something which might help in this direction. Among these conditions are that:

At least some agreement about the use of basic terms in question must be reached. Words like "meaning" and "translation" are to be used in ways that will permit rather than prevent further revision of our ideas about the objects and actions they designate. No immediate or even ultimate agreement about the real nature of such referents is required; what is needed is simply a willingness to consider various proposals as possibly true and perhaps more plausible than others advanced in the past. Those basic terms ought to be used indexically, almost like proper names, without bearing any meaning that would determine *a priori* the truth of statements expressing a particular theory or individual belief on the matter under discussion. Conventional notions of meaning and translation tend to be self-defeating in that they imply their own infallibility and so deny or somehow preclude the collective search for agreement, despite differences, that characterizes the inevitably historical pursuit of an essentially empirical subject. (Graham 1985:23)

Graham is under no illusion, however, that this is a long way from resolving the issues. He cautions that:

even if we can agree that some guarded use of language allows us to continue talking and thinking about translation with reasonable expectations, we still do not know just where that leaves us in practice. We have no definitive . . . criteria for translation . . . What we know is tentative at best, neither full nor final, but fragmentary and temporary. We have common examples of translation, and we can designate others as appropriately similar. But we have no real definition, no description with enough empirical substance or logical force to say just what it is about translations that makes them what they are. (Graham 1985:23)

Amidst such despondency and confusion, perhaps it is best to take a leaf out of Toury's book. Toury says:

I would like to start my reassessment not by jumping right into the cold water of the general debate . . . but rather by taking a small step backwards, and questioning the basic assumptions itself . . . (Toury 1980:20)

### 3.3.1.1 *The Many Faces Of Translation*

Reuben A. Brower (1959:3), with the reminder that "it is important to keep [the] humbler cases in mind if we are to understand what happens in vastly more complicated situations", provides a simple means of reassessing the basic assumptions made about the translation process. Translation, to Brower, is a process basic in all writing, thinking, in fact in all experiencing, for he observes that:

Whenever we meet an expression in any way foreign to us, whether in the language of signs and gestures or in a written or spoken language, we find ourselves saying more or less consciously, "Oh, he means by that what I mean when I do or say so-and-so." (Brower 1959:3)

Brower sketches the following as a simple case of translation:

The child points to a farmer in a hayfield and says--as I once heard a child say--"Man doing!" and the parent, who speaks the foreign language of the adult world, dutifully corrects and translates, "The man is *hay*ing." The

new term is no more accurate than the old, but it happens to be the usual way of describing this action in modern English. (Brower 1959:3)

Anticipating that some may object to the use of /translation/ for such primitive learning activities, Brower takes the mystique out of translation by pointing out that "Much of our learning of our own language takes place through similar process", adding further that:

It is also worth remembering that translating is necessitated not only by differences in the national language of speakers or writers, but also by distance in space and time within a single language. The need for translation between British and American English is well known, and it is equally obvious that the gentleman from Alabama and the citizen of New York often need an interpreter if they are to communicate without friction. (Brower 1959:3)

Yet another aspect is revealed when T. Herbert Warren defines translation as:

the expression of one man's thought as conveyed in one language generally, but not necessarily, by another man, in another language. [or] . . . the expression, in another set of words generally by another man, of the thoughts of one man already expressed in one set of words . . . (Warren 1909:94; emphasis added)

The qualifier "but not necessarily" allows for translation by the author of the original text, and therefore adds to the dimension of the *who*-factor as a parameter of the translation process.

Like Brower, Warren is aware of the effect of distance in space and explains that:

It is [also] possible . . . for a man to express his thought first in one set of words and then in another in one language, as for instance when he explains himself in simpler language to a child or a foreigner, or an uneducated person. This is a kind of translation. (Warren 1909:102)

Of the distance in time, he observes that:

It is possible also for a man to translate from one state of a language into another. Thus Dryden calls his modernisations of Chaucer translations, and certainly the difference between the modes of thought and expression of Chaucer and those of Dryden amounts to the difference between two



languages. (Warren 1909:102-103)[33]

Warren's reference to translation from "one state of a language into another", as well as Brower's reference to the "distance in space and time within a single language", is important. Each adds further dimensions to the picture of the translation process. For example, each provides the basis for a more general definition which enables intralingual translation to be placed firmly within Translation Studies--as it already is in practice (see, for example, the chapter on "False Friends And Strange Metres" by Brian Stone in *The Translator's Art* edited by William Radice and Barbara Reynolds 1987:175-186). The reminders that intralingual translation does belong within Translation Studies might prove timely especially if, as Joseph Weizenbaum claims, "The problem [of translation] shows up in nearly its full complexity if we consider the target language to be the same as the source language" (Weizenbaum 1984:186).

Alan Duff quotes the following vivid scene which reveals yet other aspects of the translation process:

*Asterix:* I wish you'd make up your mind!

*Goth:* What did the Gaul say?

*Interpreter:* He said the Centurion can't make up his mind.

*Centurion:* Who asked you to translate?

*Goth:* What did the Centurion say?

*Centurion:* What did the Goth say?

*Interpreter:* So you do want me to translate?

(Goscinnny and Uderzo, *Asterix the Legionary*,  
Colour Knight, as quoted in Duff 1984:42)

Duff fills in the scenario as follows:

When the two Gauls, Asterix and Obelix, decide to join the Roman army, they are assigned to a platoon of volunteer legionaries from all parts of the Empire. Their companions include a Goth, a Belgian, a Greek, and an Egyptian called Ptenisset, who 'speaks' in hieroglyphics. All problems of communication are handled by one interpreter, who may be required to

switch at any moment from Gothic to Greek or from Latin to Egyptian. He manages exceptionally well, only once admitting--when the Englishman remarks 'that'd lay them in the aisles, old boy'--that he is 'not sure just how to put that in Gothic and Egyptian', but that he will do his best. This remarkable man translates everything, curses included. No matter where he is--on the parade-ground, on route march, on board ship, in Caesar's tent--nothing perturbs him, not even Ptenisnet's most involved hieroglyphs or the Goth's allegorical questions. The message always gets across. (Duff 1984:42-43)

The points to note here are: firstly, that the translator seems to have neither qualms nor inhibitions about translating from any one language to any other. Secondly, from the way he translates, it can be gathered that *explanation*, as Friedrich Schlegel (in Lefevere 1977:62) maintains, is also a form of translation.[34] A third point will be brought up after the next definition.

In discussing the problem of putting translation theory into practice, Karla Déjean Le Féal first notes that there is a growing consensus among theorists that:

translation means comprehending the author's meaning and restating that meaning in another language in the way in which the author would most probably have expressed himself or herself, had he or she been a native speaker of the target language. (Le Féal 1987:205)

This is followed by the considerations below:

If we ask what this definition implies in practical terms, the only possible answer is that it means intelligent reading followed by competent writing. Obviously, one has to have the linguistic and extra-linguistic tools to understand what one is reading and to make it understood when writing it down, but these are only prerequisites of the task at hand. As for the operations themselves, they seem, on the face of it, to be exactly the same as those commonly performed by any interested reader and skilful writer, the only difference being that, by definition, the reading and writing are done by the same person and in two different languages. But again, the qualification only means that translators must have a wider range of tools at their disposal than readers and writers taken separately. It does not alter the activities themselves.

Can we therefore say that there is nothing more in translation than that?

Basically, I think there is not much more in it, or, rather, ideally,

there should not be much more in it, seeing that even children who happen to have the necessary tools are capable of doing it spontaneously and efficiently. (Le Féal 1987:206)

This last statement seems to imply that Le Féal construes translation as nothing more than the process portrayed in the *Asterix* comic strip above, and this speculation is borne out by the following remark:

Indeed, as one of my . . . colleagues . . . rightly points out, . . . 'immigrants' [sic] children are often called upon to help their parents communicate with the local people. They do it effortlessly, and they do it well. (Le Féal 1987:206)

Such a summary dismissal of the many and varied problems encountered by translators (at least, the translators of anything other than simple dialogues, for this is really what the case referred to, above, amounts to), reflects a naive approach to the problem as a whole. Translation might have begun formally with the activity of the ancient interpreter (as in the comic strip above), but, contrary to Le Féal's remarks, it does not end there.

Le Féal's definition is neither as simple nor as transparent as she makes it out to be. For one thing, as Matthew Arnold points out in his famous essay, the assumption of the way in which the author would most probably have expressed himself or herself, had he or she been a native speaker of the target language, is a delusion; the statement "restating [the author's] meaning in another language in the way in which the author would most probably have expressed himself or herself, had he or she been a native speaker of the target language" can be interpreted in various ways; it can be understood to mean different ways of dealing with the text to be translated.

Take, for example, the translation of proverbs or idioms. According to Le Féal's definition of translation, there is only one possible way of translating a

proverb, i.e. by replacing it with the corresponding proverb in the To Language (its foreign equivalent). But a compiler of foreign proverbs or idioms into English (for example) would not have translated in this manner. S/he must necessarily give the "literal" translation first, not exactly word-for-word perhaps, but definitely not according to Le Féal's definition, and then (where possible and/or desirable) to put in the *dynamic* (Nidaean) equivalent, as if s/he were writing in the To Language--as has indeed been done by the precursors of the tradition being studied.[35]

The following translations from W. E. Maxwell serve as examples:

(i) proverb no.68:

*/Rumah sudah, pahat berbunyi/*

translation and explanation:

The sound of the chisel is heard after the house is completed.

[The word-for-word translation is: /house completed, chisel heard/.]

Means: the re-opening of a matter which ought to be considered finally settled. To start an objection too late. (Maxwell 1878:137)

(ii) proverb no.157:

*/Lepas daripada [sic] mulut buaya, masuk ka mulut harimau./*

translation and explanation:

"To fall into the jaws of the tiger after escaping from the mouth of the alligator."

"Out of the frying pan into the fire."

(Maxwell 1878:155)[36]

But perhaps these arguments are not convincing enough; perhaps it might be argued that surely the definition as given by Le Féal would apply unambiguously to technical texts.[37] Unfortunately however, there, too, the ambiguity attached to the qualifier "had he or she been a native speaker of the

target language" makes its presence felt. Take a text on introductory economics, for example, written by an Australian, for use in Australian schools. If the target language were Malay, then a legitimate question to be asked would be: Would the author, had s/he been a native speaker of the target language, Malay in this instance, be writing on Australian economics, in Malay? Would s/he not have written a text on economics which would be suitable for use in a Malayan setting? Is *adaptation*, which in this case would surely be the only possible choice for the translator, allowable by the vague definition above? This question plagued many an educational planner in post-independent Malaya (early in the 1960s), when, after the first exhilarating attempt to provide textbooks (and quickly) in the national language, it was found that some of the hurried attempts proved unusable. Textbooks on economics, particularly, posed an insurmountable problem. A translation of a text on introductory (Australian) economics, with its stresses on strategies suited to large-scale farming and raw commodities such as sheep, cattle and wool proved unsuitable for use by a community whose raw commodities are tin, rubber and palm oil, especially when the last two mentioned are produced by smallholdings.

In the case of translating proverbs, it could be argued that if a proverb occurs in a novel, the "natural" thing to do would be to replace it by its dynamic (Nidaean) equivalent, to ensure a smooth, natural reading, as if written by the author "had he or she been a native speaker of the target language". But, could anyone, after reading Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Stories* be as sure that this would indeed be what the author would have done?

Mukherjee comments that Rabindranath Tagore's Nobel Prize-winning epic

poem *Gitanjali* is a travesty of a translation; that though it is beautiful poetry in its own right, it can hardly be called a translation. Tagore, it seems, took such liberties with his translation of his Indian *Gitanjali* as to make the English version unrecognisable as a translation. Would the same liberties be allowed a translator who is not the author of the text to be translated?

These issues are raised not to advocate a *laissez faire* attitude in translating, but to show that the definition as stated by Le Féal is too vague to be adequate. It is not rigorous enough to explain, for example, the translation into Malay of even a simple sentence like /the cat sat on a mat/. A spontaneous translation might be:

/kucing duduk atas tikar/, which says,

/cat sat on mat/

At first glance, the translation seems to convey the original, but this translation might not be accurate; it has not taken account of the meaning contained in the articles /the/ and /a/ in the text (articles do not exist in Malay). Then there is the question of the rhyming words /cat/, /sat/, /mat/ (see Duff 1984:26); if the author had used this sentence to illustrate rhymes, then the translator will certainly need to adopt a different strategy. It would be interesting to find out how the author would have written it had s/he been writing in Malay, for the verbs that rhyme with /kucing/ are limited to /pancing/, meaning /to angle/, and /kencing/ meaning /to urinate/. The choice for the third word is just as limited, the nouns ending in -cing being /cacing/ meaning /worm/, /dacing/ meaning /hand-held hanging weighing scales/, /kancing/ meaning /button/, /kencing/ meaning /urine/ and /loceng/ meaning /bell/. [38]

The evolution of the translation process from the activity portrayed in the *Asterix* comic strip into the complex activity (and process) that evades definition can perhaps be better understood by looking at a concrete analogy. Several analogies lend themselves for use here, but the only concrete analogy occurs in the field of the culinary sciences: for, just as the term /translation/ meant the one process--interpreting between languages--the term /cooking/, in its earliest application, meant the roasting of meat over a fire.

On a more general note, each term denotes the transfer of something from one state to another: from one linguistic/cultural state to another in the case of /translation/ and from one physio-chemical state to another for /cooking/. When experience reveals that the second state could be reached through a multiplicity of paths or trajectories (after Joseph L. Malone), each of these simple terms/concepts (i.e., /cooking/ and /translation/) accrues complexity: each becomes a *blanket* term, to cover a range of kindred activities, a fact which has been recognized in the culinary sciences. There, fortunately, the different paths are distinct and visible, and therefore remain only to be labelled: boiling, simmering, roasting, deep-frying, shallow-frying, steaming, stir-frying, pressure-cooking, baking, grilling, etc.

The activities for which /translation/ has become a blanket term are, unfortunately, less easy to label for being complex and abstract--not that there have not been attempts to do so (Dryden, Jakobson, Catford etc.), but a universally acceptable method of labelling, necessarily more rigorous, has yet to be devised. An interesting point to note here is that the use of the expression /translation proper/ (which probably is indicative of that gut-feeling--as to what

translation is all about--that most people get when the meaning of the term /translation/ is being discussed) is, in this analogy, equivalent to forcing the term /cooking/ to mean, /roasting over an open fire/ exclusively, i.e. to imply that only /roasting over an open fire/ is /cooking proper/.

Accepting that /cooking/ has evolved into a blanket term covering a range of processes (i.e., that it has given rise to a *spectrum* of cooking processes) has several implications: firstly, in discussions and discourse, it "draws the fine lines" between domains where the term /cooking/ can be used without confusion, and where a particular term which has evolved from it must specifically be used; secondly, it enables a systematic development of the discipline of cookery science along its different branches, without being hampered by a futile quest for a comprehensive theory of cooking. Also worth noting is that, although not everybody can master the culinary arts, and not every raw material can be cooked to perfection or would improve on cooking, or can be cooked, or is edible, the issue of the "impossibility of cooking" does not arise, nor does the question of the "perfect" product or method.

Similar conclusions will be reached if a second, more abstract analogy, the analogy of the educational process, is examined. Whatever the result obtained through the application of the process, the "impossibility" of carrying out the act of educating does not arise; nor do the matters of the "perfect" product or the "perfect" method. The question of an educand being partially educated does not arise either, and nor does the question of a completely educated person; unlike the effects of translation, those of education are not visible, and so are less open to comparison. But like that of translation, or of any process involving human



beings, the result of the education process is to a large extent, unpredictable.[39]

### 3.4 LIMITS OF TRANSLATION STUDIES

The cooking analogy can only go so far. Unlike in cooking, where the substance undergoing transformation is visible, what it is that changes and what it is that goes through in translation is invisible and difficult to define. The problem of identifying it is a source of perplexity which forces the issue of the limits of Translation Studies into the open. Boris Hlebec avoids the issue with a strictly pragmatic definition of the translation process but Walter Benjamin grapples with it when he deals with "The Task Of The Translator". Graham describes the problem thus:

It is the idea of pure language that gives real purpose to the task of the translator. Yet the exact nature of that language and its relation remains enigmatic even for Benjamin. His use of metaphor and his own comments on the problem draw attention to the inherent difficulty of describing just what it is that he is talking about. (Graham 1985:25)

The translation process as perceived by Walter Benjamin, and after him Jacques Derrida, is too profound to go into here, but Graham's comments must be noted:

as [Benjamin] explains it, we have no direct access to that pure language but only intimations or indications conveyed particularly, though not exclusively, through differences in translation. . . .

Translation is directed in principle to the expression of the innermost relation among languages, and the consequent relation of a translation to an original is complementary in nature. Each text complements the other much like the fragments of some larger whole and just like different meanings with a common reference. The same complementarity . . . applies to individual languages as well. The pure language is finally the object of reference for translation, and it is the ultimate referent for each and every language as a language. In order to express that convergence of languages, translation cannot simply reproduce either the reference or the meaning of the original; it cannot be simply equivalent in content and arbitrarily different in form like any ordinary version. Translation has somehow to signify and not just satisfy that very

relation of difference in meaning between languages ... (Graham 1985:25)

A discussion of Derrida's comment on his own relation to Benjamin in "*Des Tours De Babel*" is, again, beyond the scope and the level of this study,[40] but to give some idea of the interesting points brought up, Graham's interpretation of how Derrida (probably) puts into practice Benjamin's theory is quoted here:

Derrida complements Benjamin in many ways--even in the very choice of discussion. Derrida chooses the text on the task of the translator rather than another, which actually mentions Babel with reference to proper names, and he thereby extends the context of discussion. Whereas Benjamin presents the task of the translator in relation to the common end and final reconciliation of languages, Derrida begins with Babel, the origin and dispersion of languages. Benjamin stresses not only the teleological but also the theological aspects of translation, whereas Derrida brings out the archeological, the political, and the legal. The same complementarity also shapes Derrida's actual commentary on Benjamin. Not only what was missing was supplied, but what was implicit in the one becomes explicit in the other. (Graham 1985:26)

From this, it can be seen that by making translation include not only description and explanation (as Friedrich Schlegel did) but also extension and criticism, Derrida's concept of complementarity revolutionizes the concept of 'faithfulness' in translation. Whether the discipline Translation Studies can accept this extension without collapsing altogether needs to be considered. The scope for this study will be discussed in the next chapter.

**NOTES FOR CHAPTER III**

- [1] Adams (1912:5) points out that wherever there is practice there is implicit theory; however, the theory cannot become explicit till there has been reflection upon the process implied in the practice.
- [2] Alvin Toffler (1970:378) quotes psychologist Hugh Bowens as saying that anticipatory information allows a dramatic change in performance: whether the problem is that of solving intellectual puzzles, playing a cello, or dealing with interpersonal difficulties, performance improves when the individual has an idea of what problems to expect.
- [3] Popper (1985:129) is adamant about this point: "we cannot start afresh . . . we must make use of what people before us have done . . . If we start afresh, then, when we die, we shall be about as far as [Neanderthal man was] when [he died]".
- [4] Gideon Toury states that:

no descriptive study can be conceived of as a mere enumeration of isolated "facts." Rather, it is a complex, multi-stage activity, involving the *selection* of the facts to be described and explained . . . (Toury 1980:81)

and Karl R. Popper (1985:127-128), explaining the 'searchlight' theory of science, whilst admitting the possibility of chance discoveries, writes that scientific theories are not the results of random observation, but of 'systematic' observations, implying a selection of what to observe. Popper explains, however, that the systematic observations implied here are observations undertaken with the intention of probing into the truth of whatever theory or myth is under examination; a critical attitude is thus assumed, and where necessary, change will be effected. Because the

reasons for selecting are different, the "selection" carried out here is thus different from that in the case Toury describes, the one implying objectivity, the other subjectivity.

- [5] This would of course apply only to what A. E. Mander (1936:71-83) terms "a scientific generalization", i.e. one which admits of no exception. Werner Winter (1964:69) in his much-quoted treatise on the "Impossibilities Of Translation" takes a different view, insisting that "There is no completely exact translation" even whilst admitting that, "To be sure, there are . . . exceptions to this." For the sake of clarity and consistency in argument, a generalization made from too few cases, or one, such as Winter's, which ignores conflicting cases altogether, must be identified and recognized as a *pseudo-generalization* or a *false generalization*, whichever the case might be.
- [6] Ernest Fenollosa (spelt Fenellosa by some writers) notes an interesting aspect:

In diction and in grammatical form science is utterly opposed to logic. Primitive men who created language agreed with science and not with logic. Logic has abused the language which they left to her mercy.

Poetry agrees with science and not with logic. (Fenollosa in Rothenberg & Rothenberg 1983:28)

- [7] R. K. Tongue, writing on *The English Of Singapore And Malaysia* (ESM) copes with the problem most adroitly by making clear his intentions thus:

The purpose of this book is to *describe* certain features of the English which is used in Singapore and Malaysia. I have neither the desire nor the authority to attempt to *prescribe* the sort of English which should be used in these two countries. . . .

However, if it is held that an English language teaching programme should have as its objective the formation of speakers of English whose speech and writing are virtually indistinguishable from those of Englishmen, and such a viewpoint does have its supporters in Singapore and Malaysia, then the characteristic features of ESM will be seen as divergent forms which are not desired. In such a situation, the information in this book can be used prescriptively ... (Tongue 1979:21)

Laurence Lerner (1960:3), upon attempting to answer the question "What is Literature?", decides that it is partly a descriptive and partly a normative question and notes that:

This mingling of the two is not a hindrance to clear thought, nor in any way to be regretted; it is something which follows from the nature of literature. It is just as well, however, for us to realize that this is so ... (Lerner 1960:3)

- [8] Popper (1985:129) anticipates Levin's words thus: "[what] people have already constructed ... serves us as a kind of network, as a system of co-ordinates to which we can refer the various complexities," but advocates a rougher (:128) handling of the material at hand: "We use it by checking it over, and by criticizing it."
- [9] According to Popper (1985:129), "[science] grows by a method more revolutionary than accumulation--by a method which destroys, changes": Marilyn Ferguson (1982) points out that, at times, the new cannot be embraced unless the old is first abandoned.
- [10] This seemingly trivial point is raised here, as it is recognized that an open attitude is as important as it is rare in a field, where, according to Lawendowski (1979:281), "so far[, ] randomness, subjectivity, and parochialism dominate". Edmundo Desnoes (in Blonsky 1985:15) recognizes the importance of a balanced viewpoint when he laments that

"Socratic dialogue - the most powerful means of clarifying the world around us - has been substituted by . . . monologue. A manipulated and mediated vision is confusing our construction of reality." Note also James S. Holmes' comment on *Translation Studies* by Susan Bassnett-McGuire: "the best book of all to start with, as a brief introduction to various approaches to the study of literary translation and translations, is Susan Bassnett-McGuire's *Translation Studies*" (Holmes 1988:111).

- [11] Note Frawley's despairing claim (1984:159-175) that despite numerous efforts, translation theory remains a phantasm and Joseph F. Graham's comment that:

We have no . . . definitive criteria for translation . . . no real definition, no description with enough empirical substance or logical force to say just what it is about translations that makes them what they are. (in Frawley 1984:23)

- [12] See also Theo Herman's "Images of Translation" (1985), which discusses how metaphor and imagery in Renaissance discourse on translation reflect the image of translation (i.e., what translation is perceived to be) at the time.
- [13] Zareer Masani reveals a piquant aspect of this when he quotes the following description of the role of English in India in his book *Indian Tales Of The Raj*:

English is about the only language that Indians in different parts of the country can communicate with today. You may not be proud of it, but it is a reality. There are fourteen major languages recognised in the Constitution and hundreds of dialects; and there is a great deal of jealousy as far as Hindi is concerned in the non-Hindi-speaking areas. People in the south have died for their language; but English is more readily accepted on the basis of a doctrine of equal disability. (Masani 1987:150)

While English acts as the "link-language" of India, Indo-English Literature acts as the "link-literature", for as Mukherjee (1981:10) notes, for many Indians, who read only in their mother-tongue and in English, translations provide their first acquaintance with the texts they would never know otherwise. The TLC (if the term is used), is thus "the rest of India", which is a non-homogeneous linguistic community.

- [14] Matthew Arnold, in "On Translating Homer" advises the translator not to try:

"to rear on the basis of the Iliad, a poem that shall affect our countrymen as the original may be conceived to have affected its natural hearers"; for the simple reason, that we cannot possibly tell how the Iliad "affected its natural hearers." (Arnold 1954:211)

Newmark (1983:8) is of the opinion that the arguments that a translator should strive for 'equivalent' effect, (i.e. that his readership should react to the translation just like the source language readership did to the original) and that he should write as the source language author would have written if he had been a native, are both "nebulous" and "hypothetical".

- [15] Thanks are due Mrs. Mary Fung of the University of Hong Kong for pointing out that the practice is normal and accepted in the Sino-English world, and in communities which contain expatriates, exiles and immigrants. Support for her observation is found in Janos Csokits' report (in Weissbort 1989:15) that one of the first duties of Hungarian poets abroad, according to the poet Gyula Illyes (1902-83), is to translate and propagate works written by their fellows at home.

- [16] Here the translation of ancient oriental works, first started in the Romantic Period, is treated as part of the two main sources for modern (Anglo-European) translation which S. S. Pawer (1973:74) distinguishes, which are: the translation of the Bible and the translation from ancient authors.
- [17] Hilaire Belloc himself was born Joseph Hilary Pierre, in France, of part-French Catholic ancestry (*OCEL*:84).
- [18] According to H. Morley (1892:304), Roger Ascham lays great stress upon double translation: translation from Latin into English, and then back into Latin.
- [19] James S. Holmes (1978:9-10), in "Describing Literary Translations: Models and Methods", emphasizes the importance of understanding the nature of the process.
- [20] Of course, 'statistics' (i.e. figures) might also be used irresponsibly: Professors Dwight Bolinger and Donald A. Sears, (1981:308) of Harvard University and California State University, respectively, for example, have been misled by figures supplied in the *New York Times* of 16 April 1967 (:10) into believing that Malay is the language of only a small part of the Malaysian population, since "only 15 percent of the population is Malay, the rest being mostly Indians and Chinese who would rather stay with English".
- [21] Awareness of 'translation English' (Warren 1909:106), the 'Third Language' (Duff 1984) or 'translationese' (Newmark 1983:6) has led T. J. Fitiukides (1965), for example, to compile and analyse the interference



of Greek on English in *Common Mistakes In English* and R. K. Tongue to come up with *The English of Singapore and Malaysia* which studies the more complex effect of multilingualism on English. Tongue's book should prove exceptionally useful to translators of the Malayo-English tradition.

- [22] Derek Marlowe in *A Dandy In Aspic* (1974:154), for example, refers to the phenomenon of 'lingual atavism' in multilinguals, whereby the accent with which a third language is spoken is affected not by the accent of a second language which might be the language of habitual use, but by the so-called mother-tongue, or the language of infancy.
- [23] Linguists have distinguished three types of bilingualism: *co-ordinate* bilingualism, *compound* bilingualism and *subordinate* bilingualism (see, for example, Terwilliger 1968).
- [24] Quirk, for example, distinguishes three categories of native speakers of English.
- [25] It is strange that Raffel should make this mistake, for in a later chapter, he corrects Derwent May for a similar grammatical error:

there's a *di*-['at, in, or'] in *dipintu* ['at the door'] but not in *dinihari* ['dawn']--in the latter word the *di*- is part of the root of the word. (Raffel 1971:80)

François-René Dailie makes exactly the same mistake as Raffel when he translates the line:

*/Tanam keduduk atas batu/*

as

*/planting sitting on the rock/*

The mistake lies in translating */keduduk/* as */sitting/*, i.e., in taking */ke-/* as

a prefix signalling direction, and /-duduk/ as /sitting/. /Keduduk/, also known as /senduduk/ is the hardy wild rhododendron. The possibility of this mistake occurring again has been eliminated by the standardisation of modern Malay spelling; the directional /ke-/ is now a word instead of a prefix.

- [26] May's attitude, like Newman's, reflects a human trait, yet to be named, which Goethe highlights in the following anecdote:

We boys held a Sunday assembly where each of us was to produce original verse. And here I was struck by something strange, which long caused me uneasiness. My poems, whatever they might be, always seemed to me the best. But I soon remarked, that my competitors who brought forth very lame affairs, were in the same condition, and thought no less of themselves. Nay, what appeared yet more suspicious, a good lad (though in such matters altogether unskilful), whom I liked in other respects, but who had his rhymes made by his tutor, not only regarded these as the best, but was thoroughly persuaded they were his own, as he always maintained in our confidential intercourse. Now, as this illusion and error was obvious to me, the question one day forced itself upon me, whether I myself might not be in the same state, whether those poems were not really better than mine, and whether I might justly appear to those boys as mad as they to me? This disturbed me much and long; for it was altogether impossible for me to find any external criterion of the truth; I even ceased from producing, until at length I was quieted by my own light temperament, and the feeling of my own powers, and lastly by a trial of skill--started on the spur of the moment by our teachers and parents, who had noted our sport--in which I came off well and won general praise . . . (Goethe in Von Knoblauch, ed. 1904:27-28)

- [27] An interesting point to note is that A. K. Ramanujan (1989), a practitioner of the relatively new tradition of translating Tamil verse into English, also seems to favour the term /To-Language/ over /Target Language/.
- [28] In the Russian-English tradition, for example, texts by 'international' (Newmark) authors such as Tolstoy and Solzhenitsyn can be considered "facts" of the literary target system, whilst texts such as *The Thaw* by Ilya

Ehrenburg, translated by Manya Harari, and *Rainbow* by Wanda Wassilewska (translated by Edith Bone), which was The Stalin Prize Novel for 1943, are virtually unknown. Similarly in the Italian-English tradition: *The Name Of the Rose* by Umberto Eco, translated by William Weaver and well-entrenched in the target literary system, giving rise to books such as those by Ellis Peters (1980), which are written as "A Mediaeval Whodunit" "In the bestselling tradition of THE NAME OF THE ROSE", is a "fact" of the target literary system, whilst the book *For Love, Only For Love*, by Pasquale Festa Campanile, winner of The Premio Campiello Prize 1984, also translated by William Weaver, has yet to be "accepted" by the target literary system.

- [29] Extensive research of verse anthologies has unearthed only one sample of *pantun* or *pantoun* in English. The term is not listed in the *SOED*, but appears on page 433 of the *OED*, under *Pantun*; it is listed in various references (see Appendix B).
- [30] It is not a little bit ironic that whereas other disciplines can speak of, for example, *the language of education* (see George F. Kneller 1966), or of mathematics, physics, psychology or sociology, or even linguistics, the phrase *the language of translation* is ambiguous.
- [31] Flew appeals to no less an authority than Dr. Johnson, who made the observation that:
- 'Sometimes things may be made darker by definition. I see a cow; I define . . . "Animal quadrupes ruminans cornutum". But a goat ruminates, and a cow may have no horns. "Cow" is plainer' (7iv/78). (Flew 1975:74)
- [32] In view of the need for technical terms with which to discuss the

complicated phenomena making up translation, it might perhaps prove timely to recall Adams' words on recommending the resurrection of the now familiar term /educand/ in education:

Objectionable as are neologisms, it may be permitted to recommend the use of a term that so accurately represents the idea intended to be conveyed, an idea for which we have at present no word in English. (Adams 1912:13)

- [33] See also Charles Tomlinson's essay "The Presence of Translation: A View of English Poetry" (1989:258-276), which, using Dryden's and Pope's translation of Chaucer, argues that it is possible to consider a purely historical process of translation within a single language.
- [34] Friedrich Schlegel (in Lefevere 1977:62) claims that "Descriptions are merely a form of translation, just like explanation"; Lefevere (1975:100) maintains that in the translation of poetry, vital information for the right understanding of the text as a whole should be retained in the target text without topicalization. It should not simply be retained. It must also, as economically, yet as clearly as possible, be explained within the target text. The Asterix sketch supports these points: when the others ask the Interpreter what is said, they want to know (understand) what is said, i.e., what the gist of the 'message' is; in this case how it is said does not seem to matter. Gottsched (in Lefevere 1977:14), on the other hand, feels that "a translator should not become a paraphrast or an explicator".
- [35] This incidentally, is in agreement with the criterion for /translation according to text-type/ offered by Katharina Reiss, whereby:

a metaphor in an "expressive" text, for example, must be rendered as a metaphor in the translation, but this is not necessary for a metaphor in an "informative" text (1971:62). The same principle

applies for idioms . . . (in Snell-Hornby 1988:31)

Snell-Hornby dismisses this as "prescriptive generalizations [which] can be extremely misleading", but strangely enough fully supports the idea when viewed through a different example, i.e. through Honig and Kussmaul's basic theoretical approach, which is that the text is embedded in a given situation, which is itself conditioned by its sociocultural background. The translation is then dependent on its function as a text "implanted" in the target culture, whereby there is the alternative of either preserving the original function of the source text in its own culture, or of changing the function to adapt to the specified needs in the target culture. This is illustrated by:

A striking example . . . [which] is the case of advertising texts; the function of the text is preserved if the translation is likewise to be an advertisement addressed to potential customers with the intention of selling the product. It is changed if, for example, the text is used for information purposes, as on marketing conventions and strategies in the source culture. (Snell-Hornby 1988:44)

The similarity of this case to that of Reiss' has obviously and ironically escaped Snell-Hornby, for of this she says:

This observation implies something very important, which has up to now been ignored both in translator training and in traditional language departments: "the" translation *per se* does not exist, and neither does the "perfect translation". (Snell-Hornby 1988:44)

- [36] In spite of Le Feal's definition, for the express purpose of acquainting the 19th-century British colonial officers with Malay proverbs, Maxwell would have been perfectly justified had he left out the English equivalent of the Malay proverb.
- [37] The term /technical/ here taken to mean "relating to a particular field of

study" is thus not confined to the industrial, practical, or mechanical arts or the applied sciences only.

- [38] The fact that the translator sees more options the closer the text is scrutinised bears out Terwilliger's observation in section 3.2.1.
- [39] Roy Mottahedeh (1987) in *The Mantle Of The Prophet: Religion and Politics in Iran* notes that the *trivium* (i .e., grammar, rhetoric and logic), which is the basis of education for the mullahs of Iran, was also the basis for the education of, for example:

in the west men such as the saintly and brilliant theologian Thomas Aquinas and the intolerant and bloodthirsty grand inquisitor, Torquemada, and in the East, thinkers such as Averroes among the Muslims and Maimonides among the Jews. (Mottahedeh 1978:8)

- [40] Graham himself comments that although Jacques Derrida emphasizes the fact of translation when commenting on his own relation to Benjamin in "*Des Tours de Babel*":

He says that in some way, his own way, he is translating, not only someone who was a translator but also something on translation that served as a preface to a translation. He even says that he is translating a translation and so translating a text already in translation. Yet it is hardly obvious in what way or in what sense Derrida can truly be said to translate Benjamin. Certainly not in any simple or literal sense, and not in the sense that Maurice de Gandillac first translated Benjamin from German into French. Perhaps it is rather in the special sense that Benjamin assigns to translation as right or proper for it. If it were then a matter of complementation, Derrida would be translating Benjamin by complementing his text with regard to some larger whole, some wider context, some purer language. (Graham 1985:26)

## **CHAPTER IV: THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS II - DEFINITIONS**

Phaedrus' resolution of the entire problem of classic and romantic understanding occurred at first in this high country of the mind, and unless one understands the relation of this country to the rest of existence, the meaning and the importance of lower levels . . . will be underestimated or misunderstood.

- Robert M. Pirsig -  
*Zen And The Art Of Motorcycle Maintenance*

Although a discussion of deconstruction is beyond the scope of this introductory study, the subject and nature of the study necessitates considering the implications of deconstruction: translation operates on the assumption of the presence of meaning systems and the possibility of interpretation, while "Deconstruction, on the contrary, starts out by rigorously *suspending* this assumed correspondence between mind, meaning and concept of method which claims to unite them" (Christopher Norris 1982:3). As Graham (1985) explains:

The consistent effort of deconstruction has been to analyze the thought that underlies such talk [the usual talk about translation as the transfer of meaning from one language to another] and then to criticize basic distinctions that once seemed invulnerable or inevitable. As a result . . . it has become as difficult to define as to defend the difference between words and concepts, sounds and meanings, or any other version of the difference between a transcendental signified and a material signifier . . . Yet those are the very rhyme and reason that translation is supposed to distinguish by discarding the one and preserving the other in transit from language to language. Hence the effect of deconstruction has already been to question the very notions that have long defined translation. In particular, deconstruction has always defied, . . . not simply denied the system of categories that divides language into form, meaning, and effect, the very system that still presides over the standard theory and practice of translation as if nothing had ever happened to call it into question. (Graham 1985:19-20)

Fortunately for this study numerous sources, in which the theory and the practice of deconstruction have been dealt with most adequately, are available to draw upon.[1] The term /theory/ is used here with reservations, for, as Norris

warns:

to present 'deconstruction' as if it were a method, a system or a settled body of ideas would be to falsify its nature and lay oneself open to charges of reductive misunderstanding. . . . deconstruction in one of its modes: [is] a deliberate attempt to turn the resources of interpretative style against too rigid convention of method or language. (Norris 1982:1,17)[2]

The most cursory survey of the literature on deconstruction shows that the theoretical upheaval brought about in the worlds of language, literature, philosophy and translation by Derrida's deconstruction is reminiscent of that wrought elsewhere by Heisenberg's 'uncertainty' principle and Gödel's incompleteness theorem. A comparison of the impact of deconstruction and those of the other two reveals that close parallels can be drawn that bear looking into.

Together, the two earlier theories "sent terrible shock-waves through the worlds of physics, mathematics and philosophy of science" (Joseph Weizenbaum 1984:221; see also Ferguson 1986). Where before, following Leibnitz, it was thought that if the position and velocity of every elementary particle in the universe were known, then the universe's whole future could be predicted, Heisenberg proved that the very instruments man must use in order to measure physical phenomena disturb those phenomena, and it is therefore impossible in principle to know both the exact position and the velocity of even a single elementary particle.

Heisenberg ended physics' dream of explaining the whole of reality in terms of one comprehensive formalism. Then "Gödel exposed the shakiness of the foundations of mathematics and logic itself by proving that every interesting formal system has some statements where truth or falsity cannot be decided by the formal means of the system itself" (Weizenbaum 1984:221).[3] Deconstruction



shows just how impossible it is to be certain about meaning; as M. H. Abrams explains in *A Glossary Of Literary Terms* (or *GLT*):

Deconstruction is . . . a mode of reading texts which subverts the implicit claim of a text to process adequate grounds, in the system of language that it deploys, to establish its own structure, unity, and determinate meaning. (*GLT*:38)

In spite of the enormity of the changes brought about in the field of physics, it is interesting to note that Heisenberg did not falsify Leibnitz's conjectures; his 'uncertainty' principle merely shows that the major premise of Leibnitz's conjecture is unattainable (Weizenbaum). Likewise, it is important for this study to note that Derrida's deconstruction theory does not deny the "commonsense" view that language exists to communicate meaning, but "[i]t *suspends* that view for its own specific purpose of seeing what happens when the writs of convention no longer run" (Norris 1982:128). His discovery of what happens does not alter the fact that at everyday level, the seeming effects of meaning are necessary for communication.[5]

Deconstruction shows that the major premise of what must now be recognized as *pre-deconstruction* or, (to follow the physics nomenclature) *classical* translation, is unattainable. Classical definitions of translation, as Graham points out, are regularly put forward by recourse to the notions of meaning, and any talk of meaning, according to Derrida, is ineluctably 'caught up in a process which it does not control' (Norris 1982:14).[6]

Further comparison brings forth the following likenesses: like quantum mechanics (the branch developed to cope with the 'uncertainty' principle) in physics, "Deconstruction works at the same giddy limit, suspending all that we take for granted about language, experience and the 'normal' possibilities of

human communication" (Norris 1982:xii). In both areas, the difficulty, as Robert Pirsig (describing the risk of pressing reason to its furthest reaches in *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*) points out, is "to become adjusted to the thinner air of uncertainty" (Ferguson 1986:113). Abrams notes, for example, that according to Derrida:

we never have a determinately present meaning, but only seeming "effects" of meaning. . . . [T]he effect of meaning in any utterance is generated by its differences from innumerable alternative meanings, and at the same time that, since this meaning can never come to rest on an absolute presence, its determinate specification is deferred, from one substitutive linguistic interpretation to another, in a movement without end. (GTL:39)

The analogy drawn between the effects of the 'uncertainty' principle and those of deconstruction can only go so far. For, whereas the regions where *classical* mechanics holds and where it fails (i.e., where *quantum* or *relativistic* mechanics takes over) are distinguishable, deconstruction, according to the above interpretation of Derrida, at least, seems to be operative at all times. This implies that meaning is not only illusory but that the illusion of meaning is also ephemeral. This is of critical importance to this study, for the indeterminacy of meaning implies the indeterminacy of interpretation, which in turn, implies the indeterminacy of translation. But, as Robert J. Matthews (in Graham 1985:153-154) points out, from the perspective of the translator, translation is "clearly determinate". This study proceeds from the conviction that the determinacy of translation, albeit illusory and transient, justifies the *macroscopic* view of translation implicit in this study.

The paradox might be made more visible, perhaps, by looking again at the analogy from the sciences.[7] The awareness awakened by Derrida and deconstruction is also similar to that awakened by wave (or quantum or

relativistic) mechanics in physics. After the advent of wave mechanics, although the material world appears unchanged, mankind's vision of the world will (or ought?) never be the same again. Mankind is made aware of the fact that, as Ferguson (1986:177) puts it, "Even a rock is a dance of electrons". If the endless shift of difference that generates the transient and illusory effects of meaning is taken to be analogous to the perpetual movement of electrons, then the seeming effects of meaning are analogous to the effects of the movement of electrons, which are, amongst others, the material world itself and electric and magnetic effects.

The science analogue implies that there seems to be "two realities, one of immediate . . . appearance and one of underlying . . . explanation" (Pirsig 1976:54). What must not be lost sight of is that, to reject either is to reject reality. Especially in the non-science case, where one reality seems to negate the other, accepting reality is a problem. For:

Now it is not just a matter of seeing things differently, but of seeing different things. Language fails, symbols fail. This territory is too unlike anything we have known, too paradoxical, . . . One can only grasp it by experiencing. . . . as one feels for oneself cold and hot by drinking water. It is to melt all space in a wink and to look through all time, from past to future, in one thought. (Ferguson 1986:397)

Pirsig explains the apparent paradox thus:

What we have here is a conflict of *visions of reality*. [Translation] as you see it right here, right now, is *reality*, regardless of what [post-Benjaminian deconstructionists] say it might be. . . . But [translation] as revealed by its [Benjaminian-Derridaean] discoveries is also reality, regardless of how it may appear. . . . (Pirsig 1976:53)

To accept the reality of there being two conflicting visions of the one reality, is to accept the disconcerting fact that there are limits as to how far the world can be comprehended in terms of any one theory.

What can be learnt from the sciences is that, while the constraints and limitations of the logic of deconstruction do not exert their force on the macroscopic view of the world, they do constrain and limit what are to count as defensible descriptions and interpretations of the translation phenomena (Weizenbaum 1984:220-222). As it is impossible to conduct a discourse in both dimensions simultaneously and make sense, this study will be confined to the classical dimension, where "translation as we know it" (Graham 1985:24) is "clearly determinate" (Matthews 1985).

#### **4.1 WORKING DEFINITIONS**

The extent of the difficulties arising from the dearth of technical vocabulary can be better understood by taking a closer look at the most recent attempt at defining translation, which is that of Boris Hlebec (1989). Hlebec, who claims that "Earlier definitions of translation suffer from imprecision", gives the following rationale for his approach:

Translation is usually seen as a process and result of rendering the same meaning in the words of another language. However, due either to the restrictions of the target language or because of purposeful changes for the sake of the recipient, some measure of meaning is very often lost. (Hlebec 1989:129)

This, according to Hlebec, creates problems in the understanding of what constitutes translation and in the classifying of translation products, as it raises such questions as:

Can such texts be called translations, or are they only partly translations? If it does not matter that a translation be true to the original, how are we to distinguish between a translation, an adaptation, a paraphrase, and a completely different text? (Hlebec 1989:129)

One way out of this dilemma, Hlebec claims, is by a redefinition of translation. He suggests redefining translating:

as a process of creating a translated text, which has two aspects: recreation and modification. Translational recreation is recoding in such a way that intentions expressed in the source code are evoked in the target code. Translational modification is a process by which the intentions of the original text are altered, and which accompanies recreation within the same text. (Hlebec 1989:129)

Hlebec claims that:

By keeping recreation and modification strictly separate, although in actual practice problems of delimitation may sometimes arise, we have a tool for a subtler investigation of the translation process. For one thing, we avoid the paradox of a translation in which something is left untranslated. ~~Instead we are faced with the normal situation of a translated text in which not everything is recreated.~~ Some change of the source message is often involved, whereas the major part is recreated, so that we are justified in speaking of true translation. (Hlebec 1989:129; emphasis added)

Hlebec's summary dismissal of the problems that arise from traditional notions of translation makes it appear as if he is sidestepping the issue. But on closer scrutiny it can be shown that he does have a point. Like others before him, Hlebec attempts to explain observational data (evidenced, for example, by his mention of "the normal situation" "we are faced with"). He recognizes the unity of the translation process. What he is in effect saying is that the translation process occurs or is carried out through a combination, in varying degrees, of the processes which he defines as 'recreation' and 'modification'. The problem of which product can rightfully be called translation and which cannot, does not arise: everything is a translation. Unfortunately, by not touching upon the "problems of delimitation" which, he admits, "may sometimes arise", Hlebec fails to make his definition rigorous enough. A rigorous definition would identify not only what belongs in a class, but also what does not belong (Upton; Flew), and

would explain the observable differences between members of the class.

Hlebec's definition suggests that his modification of the traditional mode of looking at translation stems from a desire to avoid naming names (i.e., of the products of the various modes of translation). This leads to a definition which accepts of too much. His words, "If it does not matter that a translation be true to the original" show that he glosses over the problem.

The definition adopted for this study is that recommended by G. Van Slype et al., which, according to the authors, is "the way the [translation] profession itself defines its task".[8] The working definitions of translation, according to Van Slype et al., are situated between two extremes, which may be characterized as "traditional" and "modern" as follows:

- the "traditional" definition: the process of replacement of a text written in a source language by a text written in a target-language, the objective being a maximum equivalence of meaning.
- the "modern" definition: the process of transfer of message expressed in a source language into a message in a target language, with maximization of the equivalence of one or several levels of content of the message: i.e. referential (information for its own sake, e.g. organization note), expressive (centred on the sender of the message, e.g. speech), conative (centred on the recipient, e.g. publicity), metalinguistic (centred on the code, e.g. dictionary), phatic (centred on the communication, e.g. courtesies), poetic (centred on the form, e.g. poetry). (Van Slype et al. 1983:33)

#### **4.2 A PRO-TEM WORKING DEFINITION**

The following pro-tem definition, to be situated between the two extremes above, owes much to Upton's (1961) discussion on definitions and on past insights into the translation process.[9] Gideon Toury, for example, makes the following useful suggestion, which is:

to try and think of translation as a *class* of phenomena, the relations

between the members of which [being] those of *family resemblance* . . . . This will mean that no one specified relationship between target and source will be postulated as a necessary and/or sufficient condition for translation, nor even a fixed hierarchical order of different relations, unless translation studies wishes to stay out of keeping with those empirical phenomena, which are regarded as translations within the framework of certain *target* systems. Instead, a *cluster of properties*, plus a set of further factors which may serve as conditions for the establishment of such a *hierarchy of relevance* for every single case in question, should serve to determine the "correct" classification of a phenomenon of this class, or, rather, to account for its classification. Thus, any relationship postulated by any "traditional" theorist may, and probably will, find its place among the properties forming the cluster, but the nature and extent of its relevance will neither be *a priori* nor absolute. (Toury 1980:18)

For ease in identifying the different factors which influence the translation process (and hence the product), the following definition, strictly pro-tem, has been devised for the purposes of this study.

#### **4.2.1 Definition**

translation is a *heuristic, psycho-sociolinguistic process* which transforms a *text* from a *perceived cultural state*, the From-State, to a *projected cultural state*, the To-State. (Hasnah in Noor Ein and Atiah 1991:4)

The definition attempts to account for the different paths, or trajectories, along which translation could proceed; in other words, to account for the variety of ways/modes in which the translation of a text can be carried out. These modes or ways, or how the translation is carried out, or what will be known here as the *how-factor*, [10] depends on several other factors. The how-factor is, in this case, the dependent variable of the process. The factors influencing it are the independent variables.

The psycho-socio-aspects of the translation process, for example, are an indication that the person performing the task as well as the environment of which s/he, the *who-factor*, is a product, are among the factors determining the end-result

of the process. Recognition of the heuristic nature of the process introduces the *why-factor*, the purpose of or the motive for translating something. The what that is being translated might also influence the *how-factor*; the *what-factor* is thus an independent variable too. The term *cultural state* indicates the presence of the *when-* and *where-factors*, and highlights the dynamic aspects of translation. The words *perceived* and *projected* indicate that the *who-factor* is all-important in deciding the final product.

#### **4.2.3 Postscript On Definitions**

The above pro-tem definition is introduced merely as an aid to enable a systematic discussion of the translation process in this study. In the actual process, the independent variables are by no means as clear-cut as seems to be implied in the definition. The definition is introduced in full awareness of the problematics inherent in all definitions:

Definitions that define words in terms of other words leave those other words to be defined . . . [This] impl[ies] that all theoretic terms, hence all theories, must always be characterized by a certain openness. No term of a theory can ever be fully and finally understood. (Weizenbaum 1984:141)

#### **4.3 WALTER BENJAMIN AND TRANSLATION**

No theoretical discussion on translation can be complete without touching on "The Task Of The Translator";[11] indeed, Benjamin's whole essay is pertinent to this study. Regrettably though, it is realised that in the short space of a section, it would be impossible to discuss all the points he makes, or any one of them adequately. It is decided therefore to touch only the (minor) points which seem to have escaped discussion by other works (see, for example, Steiner 1977, Derrida 1985, Warren 1989 and A. Benjamin 1989).



For example, although the discussion of "The Task of the Translator" revolves around "certain works" which possess the essential feature of "translatability" (Benjamin 1970:70-71), and describes the ideal case,[12] Benjamin does consider other cases, if indirectly. In his explanation of what he intends /translatability/ to mean,[13] and after putting forward the analogy with /an unforgettable life/ (1970:70),[14] Benjamin contemplates the question as to whether the translation of certain linguistic creations is called for, and concludes that the question must be posed in the same sense as for the analogy: thus "the translatability of linguistic creations ought to be considered even if men should prove unable to translate them", and that given a strict concept of translation, linguistic creations are translatable to *some* (presumably varying) degree. "The higher the level of the work," Benjamin claims, the more "translatable" it is (1970:81). Thus there appear to be a spectrum of translatability across the range of linguistic creations (writings).[15]

Benjamin's vision of this ideal condition is interesting to this study, and might neither be as remote nor as far-fetched as it sounds. In fact, it is the most plausible explanation for the precursors' preoccupation with much of what was translated at the birth of the tradition. Benjamin mentions sacred writings as texts which would attain this state of translatability, but maxims and proverbs, with their home-truths and strictures, could also be of high translatability. Sayings and idiomatic expressions might also attain the ideal state. It is interesting to note that the precursors of the Malayo-English tradition of verse translation found proverbs, and those quatrains which are extended proverbs, to be the most translatable, and have accorded them the same fidelity as that accorded sacred writings, which is,

fidelity-ensured-by-literality.[16] What Benjamin has emphasized is that this is possible *only* in the ideal case of the linguistic creation being unconditionally translatable.

### 4.3.1 *Mode, Model, Modes*

Although Benjamin's essay is, as Andrew Benjamin (1989:87) points out, "complex and elusive", it is also a remarkable exercise in the use of definitions: his use of the terms /fidelity/ and /freedom/ in the essay demonstrates this and somehow recalls the following description:[17]

Phaedrus was a master with his knife, and he used it with dexterity and a sense of power. With a single stroke of analytic thought he split the whole world into parts of his own choosing, split the part and split the fragments of the parts, finer and finer and finer until he had reduced it to what he wanted it to be. (Pirsig 1976:72)

The awareness of the need to be rigorous in the use of words is heightened by Benjamin's essay in more ways than one. Take, for example, the term /classical/ used above, to describe the /non-Derridaean/ or /non-relativistic/ realm of translation. This term, implying a /non-relativistic/ or macroscopic approach is borrowed from physics; unless explained, it is easily confused with the term /classical/ (pertaining to Science), which is used in opposition to /romantic/ (pertaining to Arts), i.e., terms used to describe modes of discussion in rhetorics. Pirsig explains the following distinction:

A classical understanding sees the world primarily as underlying form itself. A romantic understanding sees it primarily in terms of immediate appearance. If you were to show an engine or a mechanical drawing or electronic schematic to a romantic it is unlikely he would see much of interest in it. It has no appeal because the reality he sees is its surface. . . . But if you were to show the same blueprint or schematic or give the same description to a classical person he might look at it and then become fascinated by it because he sees that within the lines and shapes and symbols is a tremendous richness of underlying form. (Pirsig 1976:66)

Benjamin's approach is thus /non-classical/ in the physics sense, and /classical/ or /non-romantic/ in the rhetorics sense.

The complexity of translation is brought home forcefully by the difficulty to define it. Benjamin seeks to define its underlying form:

Translation is a mode. To comprehend it as a mode one must go back to the original, for that contains the law governing the translation: its translatability. (Benjamin 1970:70; tr. Zohn)

A. Benjamin, as explained in his notes, has "slightly modified" Zohn's translation to read as follows:

Translation is a model (*Übersetzung ist eine Form*). To comprehend it as a model one must go back to the original, for that contains the law governing the translation: its translatability. (A. Benjamin 1989:89; emphasis added)

Is translation mode or model? Derrida (1985:181) took it as *form*: "Translation is a form". A. Benjamin's (1989:2) remark that, "it is still unclear what precise meaning is to be attached to translation" emphasizes the elusiveness of meaning which, exactly, is what deconstruction is out to demonstrate. Pirsig's words articulate the questions that Benjamin's and Derrida's essays on translation raise:

How do we really know anything? . . . Is reality basically changing, or is it fixed and permanent? . . . When it's said that something *means* something, what's meant by that? (Pirsig 1976:120-1)

A. Benjamin points out that if translation, for example, were fixed either historically or institutionally, as is commonly perceived, the fixity that results from either of them serves to move the emphasis away from a specific reality about the nature of translation. A. Benjamin's reflective introduction to his book is a useful reminder that no matter how workable a theory is found to be, the last words on translation would probably always be that:

it is still unclear what precise meaning is to be attached to . . . ['translation']. Even if [it is] viewed as [an activity] it is equally unclear how the task of the translator . . . [is] to be understood. (A. Benjamin 1989:2)

**NOTES FOR CHAPTER IV**

- [1] In *Modern Theory And Criticism*, for example, David Lodge (1988) assembles a useful collection of writings on the various aspects of post-structuralist criticism; a particularly interesting contribution is M. H. Abrams' "The Deconstructive Angel", which is "a lucid exposition of the deconstructionist theory of discourse", as is also his explanation of deconstruction in *A Glossary Of Literary Terms* (1984:38-40). The article (Lodge 1988:265-275) is also "a trenchant attack on [deconstruction] from the standpoint of traditional humanist scholarship". Christopher Norris (1982) in *Deconstruction: Theory And Practice* provides an objective analysis of both deconstruction and its critics. Howard Felperin (1986) in *Beyond Deconstruction: The Uses And Abuses Of Literary Theory* seeks to provide a guide to the perplexed. Peter Washington (1989) in *Fraud: Literary Theory And The End Of English* launches "an energetic and lucid attack" (John Bayley) against what he claims is "literary post-structuralist pretensions to disciplinary, cultural and political authority, and the strategic obscurity in which those pretensions are cloaked" (Washington 1989:11). Other (less controversial) sources are: *Critical Practice* (Catherine Belsey 1980); *Writing And Difference* (Jacques Derrida 1978, tr. Alan Bass); *Psychoanalytic Criticism: Theory In Practice* (Elizabeth Wright 1987); *Peculiar Language: Literature As Difference From The Renaissance To James Joyce* (Derek Attridge 1988); *On Deconstruction* (Jonathan Culler 1987); *Literary Theory* (Terry Eagleton 1986); *Untying The Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader* (Robert Young 1987); *Criticism In Society* (Imre

Salusinsky 1987); *What Is Literary Language?* (Jeremy Tambling 1988); *The Return Of The Reader: Reader-Response Criticism* (Elizabeth Freund 1987); *Modern Literary Theory: A Comparative Introduction* (Ann Jefferson and David Robey eds. 1986); *The Ideologies Of Theory Essays, 1971-1986 Vol I: Situations Of Theory* (Fredric Jameson 1987); *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics* (Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan 1988); *Post-Structuralist Readings Of English Poetry* (Richard Machin and Christopher Norris eds. 1988); *The Post Card: From Socrates To Freud And Beyond* (Derrida 1987, tr. Alan Bass); *The Truth In Painting* (Derrida 1987, tr. Geoff Bennington and Ian McLeod); *Reception Theory: A Critical Introduction* (Robert C. Holub 1985). In *The Rule Of Metaphor*, (1988, tr. Robert Czemy with Kathleen McLaughlin and John Costello S.), Paul Ricoeur provides studies of the creation of meaning in language, and treats deconstruction as just another point of view on the subject. Several essays in *Difference In Translation* (Joseph F. Graham ed., 1985) are useful companions to Walter Benjamin's and Derrida's more esoteric essays ("The Task Of The Translator" and "*Des Tours de Babel*" respectively). Patrick Williams in "Difficult Subjects: Black British Women's Poetry" brings up the interesting question of the appropriateness of applying deconstruction to poetic traditions which are oral through necessity (in *Literary Theory And Poetry: Extending The Canon* ed. David Murray 1989). Barbara Johnson (1989), in *A World Of Difference*, "attempts to transfer the analysis of 'difference' from the realm of linguistic universality or deconstructive allegory into contexts in which

difference is very much at issue in the world" (Johnson 1989:back cover).

- [2] Probably the clearest exposition of deconstruction is given in M. H. Abrams' *A Glossary Of Literary Terms* (1984:38-40), which describes deconstruction as "a mode of reading text which subverts the implicit claim of a text to possess adequate grounds, in the system of language that it deploys, to establish its own structure, unity, and determinate meanings" and gives descriptions of the varied procedures Derrida uses for dismantling the presumed presence of a determinate meaning.
- [3] Godel's theorem (which says that under a certain reasonable assumption about the system, there must be a sentence which is neither provable nor disprovable in the system) may be better understood by looking at Raymond Smullyan's (1981) explanation of it:

Consider the following paradox:

/THIS SENTENCE CAN NEVER BE PROVED./

The paradox is this: If the sentence is false, then it is false that it can never be proved, hence it can be proved, which means it must be true. So, if it is false, we have a contradiction, therefore it must be true.

Now, I have just proved that the sentence is true. Since the sentence is true, then what it says is really the case, which means that it can never be proved. So how come I have just proved it? (Smullyan 1981:253-254)

- [4] De Man is reported to have complained that deconstruction has been 'denounced as a terrorist weapon' (Norris 1982:xii); Howard Felperin (1986:112) notes that deconstruction has been rejected as 'apocalyptic irrationalism', 'cognitive atheism', and 'dogmatic relativism'; Felperin's own stand makes interesting study, and is reminiscent of the mixed (or is it mixed-up?) attitude towards Marshall McLuhan, as portrayed, for example, in Gerald Emanuel Stearn's (1968) book, *McLuhan Hot & Cool*

(the term 'apocalyptic' was also applied to McLuhan). Whilst appreciating "the genuine gains in critical self-consciousness that it [deconstruction] has made possible", and professing to be "in sympathy with the far-reaching critique of institutional practices that these movements represent", Felperin decries "the purist and imperialist tendencies" of the new theory. His words, in places, reveal the feelings unleashed by deconstruction. The section on "The Leopards In The Temple", for example, begins with the words:

As its oxymoronic self-appellation suggested from the beginning, deconstruction was always . . . an anti-methodical method. . . . As a form of oppositional practice, deconstruction gained considerable strategic and tactical advantage of its marginal or liminal status—comparable to that of such other liminal phenomena as ghosts, guerillas, or viruses . . . (Felperin 1986:110)

His conclusion is also telling:

Taming the deconstructive cat is not enough; . . . The cat must be declawed, at the very least belled . . . (Felperin 1986:221)

Peter Washington (1989:12-13) attacks "the dogmatic tendencies of radical literary theory, and its insidious inclination to mask crude indoctrination in pseudo-technical jargon", which he sees as "a threat to intellectual honesty in the literary academy".

- [5] Peter Washington makes the following point:

The idea that language is a complete, self-referential system does not entail the view that it cannot refer outside itself, and the historical evolution of language points to the contrary view: that words do adapt themselves, if not to things then to concepts. Nor, even if we accept it, does the deconstructive doctrine of the sign - that the interpretation of one always leads to another ad infinitum - necessarily affect our interpretive practice: in reality - even in academic reality - interpretations are limited at any one time to a few alternatives. We may agree in principle that a text can mean an infinite number of things: its actual meanings are limited.



though not prescribed in detail, by the context. Indeed, this is a point Derrida himself makes when he announces that for all practical purposes we will go on treating the world in the common-sense, realistic way we always have. (Washington 1989:91)

Ellen Schaubert and Ellen Spolsky have come up with a theory which might be useful for the problems Washington mentions. In *The Bounds Of Interpretation - Linguistic Theory And Literary Text* (1986), they introduce the *preference* model:

as a claim for the power of generative linguistic theory as a theory of literary interpretation. . . . [The book shows] how rules that concern linguists (specifically, a combination of well-formedness and preference rules) can help solve one of the most pressing current problems facing literary critics: how to allow a variety of conflicting interpretations, or judging among them. [The authors] hope to provide a model that will describe how, flooded with information but deprived of crucial bits, readers produce interpretations. Competent interpretations differ from one another and change over time, but even so, readers make do. (Schaubert and Spolsky 1986:2-3)

- [6] According to Norris (1982:113), Derrida sees language as everywhere revealing its potential aberrations and never coming to rest in a stable order of meaning.
  
- [7] The analogy is drawn in the spirit of Pirsig's novel. The point is raised here as it is realized that in the wake of deconstructional methods, even a simple recourse to such analogy (as an aid to visualizing an otherwise abstract paradox) might be misunderstood as a manifestation of "the yearnings, for a quasi- or pseudo-scientific discourse, . . . at work in all the dominant theoretical discourses and which aim at attracting to themselves some of the supposed cultural prestige and centrality of science and technology" (Felperin 1986:203).

- [8] Note Derrida's insistence that, "every translator is in a position to *speak* about translation, in a place which is more than any not second or secondary" (1985:184).
- [9] Writing on the theory and practice of definition, Upton identifies seven ways of defining, but warns that "A brief statement . . . is not always adequate if one really means business" (Upton 1961:138). The seven ways are definition by: synonym, antonym, identification or exemplification, comparison, classification, structural analysis, and operation analysis. What is interesting to note is that of the two verbal definitions, definition by antonym, according to Upton, is a more effective operation than definition by synonym and he explains that:

This is apparently because of the exceedingly ambiguous nature of the concept of opposition. When we attempt to define a term by identifying its opposite, we are reminded of several terms the applicability of which depends upon the circumstances, and the mind is thus challenged to make a conscious selection of the appropriate antonym. . . . [or in other words] in considering the ambiguity of the term "opposition" we move logically to think about the connection of words and things. (Upton 1961:116)

Besides Toury (1980), Brower (1959) and Warren (1909) (as described in Chapter III), Arrowsmith and Shattuck (eds. 1961), Holmes (ed. 1975, 1978), Hermans (ed 1985, 1985a), Holmes (1988), Rose (1981), Lefevere (1975, 1977), Bassnett-McGuire (1980, 1985), Nida (1964), Duff (1984), Newmark (1981, 1988), and the more recent writings in Weissborn (1989), R. Warren (1989) have all been helpful in providing insight into the translation process.

- [10] Newmark provides the useful reminder that:

any terms translation theory . . . invents should be 'transparent', i.e.

self-explanatory, and since it helps the translator to reduce jargon to simple language, it should avoid this type of jargon itself. (Newmark 1981:36)

- [11] Introducing *The Art Of Translation: Voices From The Field*, Rosanna Warren (1989:4) comments that "the new presence" affecting the translators assembled in the book is "Walter Benjamin", explaining that whilst "Benjamin is hardly 'new,' . . . he has been widely known in the United States for only twenty years."
- [12] Fidelity-as-ensured-by-literality is the goal to strive for, whereby the *pure language* can be released and linguistic complementation achieved. Freedom means that the rendering of sense is no longer to be regarded as all-important (Benjamin 1970:79). The unity of the dichotomy is possible only in the ideal case where the work or linguistic creation is completely translatable. Benjamin gives the criterion for when such a state is attained. It is:

Where a text is identical with truth or dogma, where it is supposed to be "the true language" in all its literalness and without the mediation of meaning, this text is unconditionally translatable. In such a case, translations are called for only because of the plurality of languages. Just as, in the original, language and revelation are one without any tension, so the translation must be one with the original in the form of the interlinear version, in which literalness and freedom are united. (Benjamin 1970:82)

- [13] According to Benjamin:

The question of whether a work is translatable has a dual meaning. Either: Will an adequate translator ever be found among the totality of its readers? Or, more pertinently: Does its nature lend itself to translation and, therefore, in view of the significance of the mode, call for it? (Benjamin 1970:70)

- [14] Benjamin uses the following analogy in his discussion of translatability:

One might, for example, speak of an unforgettable life or moment

even if all men had forgotten it. If the nature of such a life or moment required that it be unforgotten, that predicate would not imply a falsehood but merely a claim not fulfilled by men, and probably also a reference to a realm in which it is fulfilled: God's remembrance. (Benjamin 1970:70)

This draws the following comment from Steiner (1977:249), i.e. that:

"Walter Benjamin deflects the notion of a future translatability towards mysticism: . . . there are works not yet translatable by man, but potentially so, in a realm of perfect understanding".

- [15] It is important to realize this, and to realize that where works are less than completely translatable (in Benjamin's sense), fidelity-in-literality does not apply.
- [16] Newmark is likewise inclined: Christian Mair (*EFL Gazette*, September 1988), reviewing *A Textbook of Translation* (Newmark 1988) remarks that he is "an open-minded 'literalist'".
- [17] Benjamin notes that the traditional concepts in any discussion of translations are fidelity and license, "the freedom of faithful reproduction and, in its service, fidelity to the word" and claims to provide a deeper interpretation of these concepts. Regrettably, his arguments are applicable only to the ideal case; where the situation is non-ideal. Benjamin raises the familiar questions, but has no solution to offer:

the problem of ripening the seed of pure language in a translation seems to be insoluble, determinable in no solution. (Benjamin 1970:77)

## CHAPTER V: PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS I: THE INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

I keep six honest serving-men  
(They taught me all I knew);  
Their names are What and Why and When  
And How and Where and Who.

- Rudyard Kipling -  
in "The Elephant's Child", *Just So Verses*

That a text can be translated in various ways, is a fact that has long been recognised; this is illustrated by, for example, Theodore H. Savory's "clever and notorious" observation of the many and varied demands made on translation (Newmark 1982:53).<sup>[1]</sup> How this comes about, however, has not been looked into in great enough detail. This is regrettable, since a knowledge of the factors influencing the mode of translation might provide insight into the process; and a comprehension of the nature of the process, as James S. Holmes points out, is necessary before the nature of the product could be understood (Holmes 1988:81).

To attempt a comprehension of so complex a process is, of course, beyond the scope of this study. But, by investigating the practical implications of the working definition introduced, this chapter could explore the ways in which the independent variables identified might influence the choice of pathway, thus giving rise to what Marilyn Gaddis Rose (1981) terms the *Translation Spectrum*.

The picture of the various translations of a text as forming a spectrum seems to be particularly apt. Its aptness becomes apparent when the translation spectrum is compared to its analogue in the visible region of the electromagnetic spectrum, i.e., the iridescent spectrum obtained from the *dispersion* of white light. Like white light, the text can be completely represented only by itself; each

version obtained in translation, like each colour of the spectrum, can thus represent only a partial picture of the original. This fact seems to be tacitly accepted by readers of translated works, as can be gathered, for example, from the following observation, i.e., that:[2]

Anyone who . . . has served on a Public Library Committee . . . knows . . . that of any work of great reputation every translation that is put on the Library shelves will have its own share of admirers . . . [and] many a reader will consult more than one translation. Two translations are four times as good as one, and in the broad span of literary adventure there is a welcome place for them all. (Savory 1957:59; emphasis added)

A survey of translation terms shows that besides */spectrum/* in */translation spectrum/*, a number of terms from the field of light (in physics) have also been incorporated in the vocabulary of translation. Terms such as */image/* and */reflection/* have long found a place; */autonomy spectrum/* and */conventionality spectrum/* are other terms introduced by Marilyn Gaddis Rose (1981); the verb to */refract/* is a (relatively) recent introduction by Lefevere (*Babel* 2/1983:70), and is interesting, for it is the refraction of the components of white light by certain materials that give rise to rainbow-hued spectrums. Joseph L. Malone's discussion on the rudiments of a body of analytic techniques for translation introduces more terms which, considered individually, seem non-technical enough but together present a technical array commonplace in physics: terms such as */trajectional analysis/*, */divergence/*, */convergence/*, */amplification/*, etc. (Malone in *Babel* 1/1986:13).

As the complexity of the translation process unfolds, it would be interesting to see what other terms would prove suitable (or even necessary) for adoption. That this particular area of physics should show greatest affinity with the field of translation is itself intriguing, for it is here that one of the paradoxes

of science, the dual nature of light, is seated. Perhaps, just as the physical phenomenon is better understood only by recourse to the more complex explanation afforded by quantum physics, the translation process might be less confusing only by looking at it in all its complexity. Certainly, from *reflection* and *refraction*, it would be but one step (albeit a quantum step) to *diffraction*, a concept already in use in poetics: Marcus Cunliffe, for example, speaks of poetry as representing "experience through the *diffractive* medium . . . of a highly civilized sensibility" (Cunliffe 1954:259; emphasis added).

The parallel gradation from simple to more complex cases is striking: *reflection* (where a /mirror image/ of the source is obtained), being the simplest phenomenon in the study of light, is comparable to those cases in translation where obvious equivalences/images present themselves in the To-State and where there would seem to be only one logical path of translation to follow. Of course this is not necessarily the path followed by the translator, in which case it is interesting to note that just as mirror images are sometimes distorted or warped, translations, too, can be distorted or warped.[3]

The *refraction* of white light into its component colours has been mentioned above; the parallel phenomenon in translation is where a text can be translated in several ways, all defensible.[4] The term as used here presents a concept which is not related in any way to Lefevre's concept of refraction.

Then there are the more complex cases where seemingly unlike and unlikely equivalences are the correct choice in the To-State.[5] However, as Holmes points out, before a discussion of such cases is possible, "a more complex analytical method needs to be developed" (Holmes 1988:42). Holmes

reminds further that:

In developing that method the translation analyst will have to rely first and foremost on the techniques and findings of contemporary literary and linguistic research. But at the same time [s/he] will have to evolve [her/]his own terms and techniques, adapted to the problems specific to [her/]his field of study. (Holmes 1988:42)

The introduction of new terms into Translation Studies, though encouraging, is not fast enough for the needs of a rapidly developing discipline--which is ironic, considering the great (on-going) contribution the field makes to the professional (i.e., technical) vocabulary of other fields. On the subject of neologisms, it is certainly interesting to note that poets, for example Dryden, and more recently, Ezra Pound, seem less hesitant about proposing new terms, or reviving old ones.[6]

The issue is raised here, for it is realized that whilst aversion to new terms might perhaps contribute to the dearth of suitable terminology, and such aversion might be difficult to overcome, it is also realized that to facilitate discussion, it would be necessary, in places, to introduce new terms/concepts for use in this study. For example, the notion of spectrums as introduced by Rose (1981) could be extended to that of the diffraction spectrum: the diffraction spectrum of an object bears no direct resemblance to it, but, by representing the deeper (subatomic) structure of the object, is characteristic of it. This provides a ready analogy for the case where the translation bears no formal resemblance to the original text (i.e., where it is not an 'image') but where it obviously *is* a translation of the original.[7] Using this analogy, it could perhaps be said that *diffraction* is what takes place in the translation of, for example, "mands" (B. F. Skinner as discussed in Terwilliger 1968:102), where the text/message could be



viewed as a stimulus and the aim of translation would be to produce the same stimulus, irrespective of its (Nidaean) formal equivalence to the original.

The phenomenon of mands can be looked at in at least two ways. Firstly, from the psycholinguistic perspective, Terwilliger, in discussing mands in brain-washing, treats them as texts/messages which are devoid of meaning--they are mere stimuli; secondly, from the point of view of translation, mands could be treated as texts/messages whose translation requires penetration beyond their form, into their deeper structure, as it were. The translation of dramatic texts and the translation of certain poems--in fact of anything which demands a finely-honed "sensitivity" (as implied by Cunliffe above) in the translating--would also seem to involve diffraction.

### **5.1 THE WHO-FACTOR**

That the translation product varies with each translator has long been recognized, too;[8] and it is easily proved. A comparison of the translations of a text, each of which has been translated by a different person, would verify this.[9] But beyond acknowledging the above truism, not much has been done to study the effects of individual differences on the translation process. Recognition of the fact leads Belloc (1931) Duff (1981), and Newmark (1981, 1983, 1988), for example, to conclude that translation is best done by a native speaker of the To-Language. Snell-Hornby emphasizes the difference between the trained and the untrained:

translation is a skill demanding utmost proficiency, specialized knowledge and the sensibility of an artist, which--like the activities of its kind--*should be left to the expert.* (Snell-Hornby 1985:5; emphasis added)

She observes further that:

translation, like any other kind of specialized activity, will have to be left to the specialists and not just any native speaker or dictionary owner who happens to be available . . . . The idea that anyone is qualified to translate is all the more absurd whenever one considers that in theory, a translator is expected to be bilingual and bicultural. (Snell-Hornby 1988:131-132; emphasis added)

Translation certainly should not be left to "just any native speaker or dictionary owner who happens to be available", but neither should it be left to just any 'expert' and/or 'specialist'. Experience in the Malayo-English tradition of verse translation shows that terms such as "expert" and "specialists" are at their most ambiguous in the field of translation: the worst translations seem to have been perpetrated by specialists and experts in some field or other, usually connected with language and/or literature (see section 2.4). In a situation where one's status (academic etc.) or connections (being in or associated with the publishing trade/profession, for example) and not proven aptitude or capacity for translation, facilitate entry into the profession, the terms 'expert' and/or 'specialist' are low in credibility. This is an acutely felt problem in the Malayo-English tradition of verse translation. In a situation where one published translation (no matter how badly done) would guarantee the publication of another, anyone can attain the titles of 'expert', 'specialist' or 'professional'. Such terms are also not helpful when it is realised that experts and specialists have to start somewhere. A survey of published interviews with translators (see Edwin Honig's *The Poet's Other Voice: Conversations On Literary Translation* 1985, for example), would show that a number of translators, now professional, entered the profession accidentally. It would be a pity to close the door to someone suitable simply because s/he is not as yet an 'expert' or a 'specialist'. [10]

Rather than attempt to decide on who best perform the translator's task, this section will confine its discussion to the ways in which individual differences might affect the translation product. For example, a translator, as Snell-Hornby (1988:132) points out, ought in theory, to be bilingual at least, if not bicultural. Yet, even the most cursory survey of Malayo-English verse translation would show that bilingualism alone is no guarantee of proficiency in translating; it would appear that not every bilingual can translate well--an observation consistent with findings in psycho- and neurolinguistics.

There are two aspects to this. Michel Paradis (1978), for example, writing on "The Stratification Of Bilingualism", discusses three types of bilingualism: coordinate, compound and subordinate:[11] this is the first aspect. A particular type of setting in which language learning takes place gives rise to a particular type of bilingualism. As described in Paradis:

learning the two languages in different settings would foster coordinate bilingualism. When learned in identical settings, if, for instance, both parents would speak the two languages interchangeably, compound bilingualism would more likely develop; and subordinate bilingualism would be the outcome of learning the second language through an indirect method, as in the schools where the students would learn lists of words and their translation equivalents. (Paradis 1978:166)

Of the three types, the coordinate bilingual (exhibiting little interference in either language) would seem to conform to the general idea of a bilingual, and would most likely be able to translate efficiently in either direction. Subordinate bilinguals, though seeming to be most disadvantaged, could still make proficient translators, but in a specific direction. By definition (see Paradis 1978:165) they are the bilinguals who speak and write the first language "like a native" and reduce the second language to it. If they could use the dictionary intelligently, or

perhaps by collaborating effectively, subordinate bilinguals might still make efficient translators when translating *into* their first language. Compound bilinguals would appear to be the least suitable for the task of translating, for they would exhibit interference in both languages.

It is interesting to note that translators of the Malayo-English tradition come from all three categories: the precursors (especially those who lived among natives) would most likely be coordinate bilinguals, as would some of the native speakers of Malay who were educated in the British system, but were not uprooted from their own culture. The immediate succeeding generation, unfortunately, would most likely be compound bilinguals, and, with the lack of stress on English, together with the emphasis on the national language, later generations would most likely be subordinate bilinguals. By the same token, modern day native speakers of English would most likely be subordinate bilinguals in Malay-English. It would be interesting to find out if the Malayo-English verse translations produced so far would bear out these conjectures.

The stratification of bilingualism seems to suggest that if tests could be devised which would give a reasonably accurate identification of the bilingual type, an investigation of the characteristic strengths and weaknesses--in terms of translating competence--of each type, might prove helpful. Each type of bilingual would then be aware of potential mistakes s/he would make in translating and would then be in a better position to be on the look-out for such mistakes when editing, if not to avoid them during the translation process itself.

Besides the above, research into the Malayo-English tradition of verse translation also shows that translating abilities differ even amongst equally

competent bilinguals; this is the second aspect. This would seem to support John B. Sykes' (1983:44) observation in *The Translator's Handbook* that: "There is natural aptitude or flair for translating". The translation produced by a person with less talent for the task could therefore be expected to be different from that produced by someone more talented, thus illustrating how the who-factor could give rise to a variety of translation products. The issue is raised here as it is realised that although it is generally accepted that translating requires talent (as implied, for example, in Snell-Hornby's words, above), no test seems to have been devised with which to select or restrict future entries into the field.[12] It is interesting to note that, according to Sykes, such talent is shown, for example:

in the ability to think of an equivalent proverb in the TL: *de appel valt niet ver van de boom*: 'like father, like son'; or the ability to go quickly to the right source of information, possibly a publication in one language or another rather than any form of bilingual document; or the capacity to make a discerning choice among alternative renderings that present themselves. (Sykes 1983:44)

That affinity between translator and text (or author) is desirable, has also long been recognized. Lawrence Humphrey (1559, as discussed in Steiner 1977:63-64),[13] for example, in advocating the "just via media", explains that:

The true translator will seek to attain 'plenitude, purity and propriety', but above all he seeks aptitude. He does so in choosing a text matching his own sensibility. The ideal of aptitude will govern his choice of an appropriate style. (Steiner 1977:264-265)[14]

Pierre-Daniel Huet (1680, as reported in Steiner 1977:262), introduces the principle of stylistic accord, which is very similar to Humphrey's concept of 'aptitude', while Wentworth Dillon, the Earl of Roscommon, in *An Essay on Translated Verse* (1684) bids the translator to "seek a Poet who your way do's bend" and to "chuse an Author as you chuse a Friend" (as quoted in Holmes et

al. 1975). More recently, Sykes notes that:

There is a connection between this or that type of mind and the kind of translation work that suits it best. The convergent mind, which moves in to the kernel of the problem from various directions, is that of the technical translator, who needs to have considerable deductive ability on occasion; the divergent mind, which thinks outwards, is more suited to literary translation. (Sykes 1983:44-45)

Thus, aptitude, among other factors, will influence the product. The basic knowledge required for all kinds of translation is the same, but there is a difference between the translation of literary texts and the translation of non-literary texts: it is similar to the difference between the writing of literary texts (poems, for example), and the writing of non-literary texts (engineering text-books, for example). Even among translators of prose, individual differences, and affinities (or lack thereof) between translator and text would show in the translation product: two equally competent translators of different tastes would translate a text differently.[15]

### **8.1.1 Dimensions Of The Who-Factor**

Aspects of the who-factor discussed above are mainly obvious ones arising from "Individual Differences in Language Behaviour" (see, for example, Carrol 1964:66-69). Combining the results of a number of studies, Carrol lists several more or less independent *dimensions* or *factors* of ability in the domain of language behaviour. The list will be recorded here, for although, as Carrol warns, it is "by no means exhaustive and remains to be clarified by further research", the dimensions identified have great practical significance in translation. They are:

1. *Verbal knowledge*. . . .
2. *Abstract reasoning abilities*. . . .
3. *Ideational fluency*. . . .

4. Word fluency. . . .
5. Fluency of expression. . . .
6. Grammatical sensitivity. . . .
7. Naming facility. . . .
8. Oral speech ability. . . .
9. Articulation ability. . . . (Carrol 1964:67-68)

A further dimension, *Translation ability*, would need to be added to render the schema adequate for most translation purposes. Dimensions 1, 4, 5, 6, and 7, would lead to obvious stylistic differences, more discernible in the translation of literary and non-technical prose (such as magazine articles) than in highly technical texts (such as engineering/chemical/mathematical tables). Tables have been specified as an example of texts whose translation would least show up individual differences, as a survey of translated menus, operating instructions and technical manuals would show that the translation quality of these seemingly straight-forward compositions fluctuate greatly with individual linguistic/translational ability. Dimensions 8 and 9 are obviously crucial in oral translation (interpreting). Dimensions 2 and 3 have less obvious consequences in translating, but are related to *comprehension ability*, a crucial factor in the ability to translate well.

## 5.2 THE WHY-FACTOR

The heuristic nature of translation has also long been recognized: Bodmer, for example, as mentioned earlier, points out in "The Ninety-Fourth Letter", that "Just as the intentions of translators are very different, just so must the world be full of an innumerable amount and many varieties of translations" (Lefevere 1977:21). It is also implicit in functional classifications of translations, for example Reiss' (as discussed in Rose 1981, House 1981 and Snell-Hornby 1988).

Acceptance of this feature of translation means recognition of the fact that, as Mary Snell-Hornby (1988:44) points out: "'the' translation per se does not exist".[16]

The importance of the why-factor, the factor arising from the heuristic feature of translation, in the attempt to understand the translation process, can be appreciated by comparing the kindred activities of parodying and translating. The steps taken and the mental processes involved in both activities are similar--what differentiates the one from the other is the aim, purpose or intention i.e., the why-factor. Of course it might be argued that in some cases the product of both activities is parody or burlesque or travesty, but it is argued here that the parody which is the unfortunate result of incompetent or careless translating is produced inadvertently.

The justification for isolating the why-factor comes from the fact that although translating after the style of another master, i.e., other than the author, is indistinguishable from parody (especially when the result of the process is a travesty), the process itself is felt to be different. This can be seen from comparing Aveling's proposed modes for translating the *pantun* (which can imitate specific models from either William Blake or William Carlos Williams) and G. K. Chesterton's "Variations Of An Air".[17] The difference between the two processes rests solely on whether the intent to mock, or to satirise is present or absent. Since parody makes no distinction between imitation which stems from profound admiration and that motivated by a sense of perverse humour, or that provoked by contempt, this means that translation by imitation would overlap with some part of parody.



The difference might be better appreciated by recourse to a concrete analogue, that of portraits: the subject's distinguishing features will be apparent in both a realistic portrait and a caricature. A successful translation by imitation is comparable to a realistic portrait, while a successful parody (in the ordinary, perverse sense) is comparable to a brilliant caricature. Of course, a caricature of sorts might also be produced inadvertently by the clumsy efforts of a less skillful pen, and this is where, in the translation instance, the mode in question overlaps with parody. Translation of the *pantun* as suggested by Aveling would be unthinkable as an alternative mode if it were not differentiated from parody.

The why-factor similarly differentiates between intralingual translation and mere rewording, or paraphrase: intralingual translation, as opposed to paraphrase, is carried out for a specific purpose. Consider, for example, the translation of the classics for children (e.g., *Lamb's Tales From Shakespeare*): the why-factor motivating the process would have dictated a deliberate choice of words, as opposed to the randomness of choice in paraphrase.

### 5.3 THE WHAT-FACTOR

The various ways in which *pantun* (and other traditional verses) might be translated, illustrates how the what-factor could give rise to different modes of translating. *Pantun* mean many things to Malays: they could be nursery rhymes, love poems, cautionary verses, didactic verses, riddles, satirical verses or nonsense rhymes; they could woo, threaten, persuade or chastise.

Translators averse to the 'clippity-clop' rhythm associated with the *a-b-a-b* rhyme scheme in English, might find such a scheme unsuitable for the translation of serious verse into English.[18] There should be no objections,

however, for the use of the scheme in the translation of light love verses, of the "Roses Are Red" variety,[19] and of nursery rhymes of the "Jack and Jill" variety.

Ideally, of course, a translation would seek to preserve both the form and the content of the original. But translations of *pantun* which change the *a-b-a-b* rhyme scheme to *a-a-b-b*, have been found to be just as effective (see, for example, stanza [1.4a] in Chapter I). Thanks to Pope, this form, which is made up of couplets, seems particularly suitable for the translation of cautionary, didactic or satirical verses, and especially for conveying wit. Interestingly, this form does not exist in traditional Malay prosody, and so it could be introduced as an alternative form of *pantun* translation, especially when the constraints of rhyme might make adoption of this form a more feasible alternative than keeping to the scheme of the original. Translating *pantun* into a mono-rhyme scheme would be confusing, as *syair* and some *seloka* are defined by this particular scheme.

The translation of *syair* poses a bigger problem. As shown in note [20] of Chapter I, the form is not unknown in English prosody; but it is not popular in modern times. The fact that it is a narrative might make *syair* amenable to translation into blank verse, which seems to be the popular medium for narrative verse in English.

The significance of the what-factor can be gathered from James S. Holmes's observation. Putting in juxtaposition the translations of Homer by three contemporary translators (Lattimore, R. Fitzgerald and Pound),[20] Holmes notes that:

there is an extremely close relationship between the kind of verse form a translator chooses and the kind of total effect his translation achieves. It

is, in fact, a relationship so central to the entire problem of verse translation that its study deserves our utmost attention--study, . . . to understand the nature of various kinds of metapoem . . . (Holmes 1988:30)

#### 5.4 THE WHEN- AND WHERE- FACTORS

The *time* and *space* (or the when- and where-) factors of translation have been adequately discussed in several sources (see, for example, Warren 1909:102-103, Rose 1981:1-7). Lefevere (1975) examines, in detail, elements of not only time and space (or place), but also tradition (i.e., *tp̄t*). It is clear, from Lefevere's discussion of the different strategies adopted by translators to deal with them, that these elements add further possibilities to the mode of translation, thus adding to the number of possible pathways that could be traversed in translating.

In the definition, the term *cultural state* accounts for the *tp̄t* elements, and serves to emphasise that, as Juri Lotman is reported to have pointed out, "human culture is a dynamic system" (in Bassnett-McGuire 1980:41). Bassnett-McGuire gives the useful reminder that, "Attempts to locate stages of cultural development within strict temporal boundaries contradict that dynamism" and illustrates the problem thus:

A[n] . . . example of the kind of difficulties that arise from the 'periodization approach' emerge when we consider the problem of defining the temporal limits of the Renaissance. There is a large body of literature that attempts to decide whether Petrarch and Chaucer were medieval or Renaissance writers, whether Rabelais was a medieval mind *post hoc*, or whether Dante was a Renaissance mind two centuries too soon. (Bassnett-McGuire 1980:41)

Rose, meanwhile, reminds that:

the translator--or a machine programmed for translation--is not only a component of the time and the space [s/he] translates in but is [her-/himself] compounded of time and space. . . . contours change in time, for words enlarge and diminish their referential fields, and the actions and the concepts they describe change in cultural significance. . . .

This accounts for the dynamism in translation, the spaces a translation successively occupies, first with the translator, a member of a cultural generation, and subsequently with readers of other generations. (Rose 1981:5)

which supports Bassnett-McGuire's observation that, "a metatext . . . is *variable* [in time and place]."

However, the first half of the statement, i.e., that "a text is *fixed* in time and place" (Bassnett-McGuire 1980:101), needs qualifying. Historically and geographically, a text is fixed in time and space; but in the context of translation, especially with regards to the translator, a text is, like the translator, situated in a dynamic cultural state. The pro-tem definition takes this into account with the use of the qualifier 'perceived', for it is maintained here that different translators might have different perceptions of the cultural state the text is in, and a text is as distant in time and space from the translator, as the translator perceives it to be.

A simple example would be the case of the following fictitious verse translators, A and B, apparently belonging to the same 'age'/'period' (the 1980's), and culture (both being native speakers of English). Translator A was brought up on the poetry of Dryden, Pope, Wordsworth, Longfellow and Tennyson, whilst translator B on the Penguin modern poets. Their reactions to traditional Malay verse would most likely be different, for A would probably find the rhymes and rhythms of traditional Malay verse familiar, and would most probably translate into the forms familiar to her/him, whilst translator B would find these 'outdated'/'archaic' and would most probably modernise the text in her/his translation. A survey of the translations in the Malayo-English tradition would seem to suggest that the perceived distance between any two entities in separate cultural states/spaces would be *psycho-temporal* and *psycho-spatial*

in nature. Burton Raffel, for example, in *The Forked Tongue* (1971), speaks of feeling closer to one culture (Old English) than to another (Indonesian). In the Malayo-English tradition, it is surmised that precursors such as R. J. Wilkinson and Hugh Charles Clifford would have felt closer to their texts than would scholars C. O. Blagden or W. W. Skeat.

### 5.5 REVIEWAL

A point to be kept in mind when discussing the independent variables is that these variables are not as distinct as made out; each variable is intrinsically bound to the who-factor. The effect of the who-factor on the why-factor, for example, is very obvious: each translator interprets each why-factor in a personal way.

A survey of the Malayo-English tradition of verse translation shows that to make the From-Text "accessible" to the To-Audience, seems to be a common why-factor for the translation of, for example, the Malay *pantun* into English, and yet, as seen from the various translations, a common reason does not necessarily lead to a common mode of translating: the precursors attempt to retain the style and form of the From-Text, while the perpetuators choose a variety of modes. Aveling (1986), as mentioned above, models his translations after Blake and William Carlos Williams.

Yet another effect of the who factor is this; a translator's perception of her/his work/style might be different from its perception by others. Katherine Sim, who finds the *pantun* "remarkably crisp, often extremely colourful and passionate, sometimes bitterly cynical and . . . says a great deal in a very small space" prefers the simple, direct mode, and claims to translate:

more or less literally so that the use of similes and proverbs can be clearly seen, and also to retain something of the essence and feeling of each *pantun*, which I personally, perhaps mistakenly, think can be better expressed in plain simple English . . . (Sim 1987:13; emphasis added)

However, in the following example, in which the *pantun*:

*Kalau roboh kota Melaka,  
Papan di Jawa saya dirikan,  
Kalau sungguh bagai dikata,  
Nyawa dan badan saya serahkan.*

is translated into:

If Malacca's fort should crumble,  
I'll raise a wooden one in Java,  
If it's the truth you've spoken,  
The breath of life to your lips I'll surrender.  
(Sim 1987:34-35)

it can be seen that Sim has done the opposite. The last line of the original, which says, word for word, and in the same order:

/soul and body I'll surrender./

is translated as:

/The breath of life to your lips I'll surrender./

(Compare Sim's translation to an earlier version:

Should Malacca's fort be broken,  
Log planks I'll raise on Java land  
If it is the truth you've spoken,  
My soul and body's in your hand.  
(Hamilton 1944:48-49))

The effect of the who-factor on the translation process/product is pervasive.

Of individual differences, Samuel Butler, in *Erewhon*, makes the following observation:

[We are unable] to perceive the subtle differences in human combinations--combinations which are never repeated. . . . no two men ever were or ever will be exactly alike; and the smallest differences may change the whole conditions of the problem. Our registry of results

must be infinite before we could arrive at the full forecast of future combinations . . . (Butler 1945:259; emphasis added)

The above words serve as a further reminder that the possibilities in translation options which are opened up by who-factor effects would be numerous; the immediate effect is the seemingly countless variety of translation products obtainable from any one text. This would explain why, as Holmes (1978:80-81) surmises, the repertory method,[21] of studying translated texts, though preferable to the method which employs "*ad hoc* selections of the distinctive features" of the text, would prove to be an "enormous" task.

**NOTES FOR CHAPTER V**

- [1] Theodore Savory lists the demands made on translation as follows:

1. A translation must give the words of the original.
  2. A translation must give the ideas of the original.
  3. A translation should read like an original work.
  4. A translation should read like a translation.
  5. A translation should reflect the style of the original.
  6. A translation should possess the style of the translation.
  7. A translation should read as a contemporary of the original.
  8. A translation should read as a contemporary of the translation.
  9. A translation may add to or omit from the original.
  10. A translation may never add to or omit from the original.
  11. A translation of verse should be in prose.
  12. A translation of verse should be in verse.
- (Savory 1957:49)

- [2] Adams (1973:15) notes that Sir Ronald Storrs and his friends collected no fewer than 451 versions of Horace's little ode to Pyrrha (l.v) of which 181 were in English.

- [3] Homonymy and/or polysemy in the From-Language might catch the translator unawares, as for example can be seen in Daillie's translation of Malay words derived from the root word */duduk/*, meaning */sit/* or */live/* as in */she lives there/*. In one instance, Daillie translates the line:

*/Tanam keduduk di atas batu/*

as:

*/Planting sitting on the rock/* (Daillie 1988:4),

obviously interpreting */keduduk/* as */sitting/*. The word */keduduk/* here is actually a corruption of the word */senduduk/* or */rhododendrons/*, which is the only choice.

In another instance, Daillie (1988:159) translates the line:

*/Buaya ganas kedudukanku/*



as:

*/A ravening crocodile for my home/*

translating */kedudukanku/* as */my home/*. Here Daillie interprets the root word */duduk/* as */live/*. */Kedudukan/* is actually */status/*, whereas */home/* or */abode/* is */kediaman/*, i.e., */a building to live in/*. Such aberrations have warped/distorted the meaning/image of the original.

- [4] As shown in Chapter III, a proverb or a saying, or an idiomatic expression could be translated, word-for-word of the original, if the purpose were to introduce these to the To-Culture, or they could be translated by equivalents in the To-Culture, if the purpose is to ensure a smooth reading, as when encountered in a novel. Take the proverb which describes escape from one nasty situation only to end in one even nastier, namely:

*/keluar dari mulut harimau, masuk ke mulut buaya/*

This could be translated as:

*/out of a tiger's mouth, into a crocodile's/*

if the object were to introduce Malay proverbs, or into the more familiar:

*/out of the frying pan into the fire/*

to enable uninterrupted reading, if encountered in narrative prose.

- [5] The translation of metaphors, mands, certain poems and plays, would be examples of these complex cases. The illustration in note [4] could also be an example, if the second of the two translations were considered, for a */frying pan/* would seem to be an unlikely equivalent of a */tiger's mouth/*.
- [6] Michael Davidson in the article "'From The Latin Speculum': The Modern

Poet As Philologist" makes the interesting observation:

One of the more unusual gestures to be found in contemporary poems is what could be called "lexical insert," [where] the poet turns to the dictionary in order to provide a gloss on a word or phrase, the etymology being included as part of the poem itself. (Davidson 1987:187)

Davidson illustrates this with an excerpt from Robert Duncan's "At The Loom" (Passages 2). Instead of simply verifying a word's origins, the lexical insert by the poet testifies to the word's life in the present. Ezra Pound's comments on the matter are as follows:

Bad critics have prolonged the use of demoded terminology, usually a terminology originally invented to describe what had been done before 300 B.C., and to describe it in a rather exterior fashion. (Pound 1985:25)

- [7] The illustration in note [4] is an example of this, if the second of the two translations were considered. A more concrete example of the phenomenon would be the abstract drawings of, for example, Pablo Picasso; to the ordinary person, Picasso's drawings would seem to bear no visible resemblance to their models, but to the initiated, they obviously do.
- [8] Of course, there could be exceptions to this; research into the Malayo-English tradition shows that two different translators might still come up with identical translations, as seems to be the case with the translation of Usman Awang's poem "*Tanah Melayu*"/"Malaya". A comparison of Asraf's translation of the poem (in Rice and Abdullah eds. 1963:5) and Adibah Amin's (in Usman 1982:11) would show the translations to be identical except for some typographical differences: in the second translation (Adibah's), only the first line of each stanza begins with a capital letter, whereas every line begins with a capital letter in the

earlier translation (Asraf's). But these 'differences' correspond to differences in the way the original is represented in the later publication, and cannot be considered as differences in translation.

- [9] Nobuyuki Yuasa (in 1987), for example, writing on the translation of a particularly well-known *hokku*, mentions fifty other translations, so different from each other, as to make anyone going through them wonder if they were based on a single original.
- [10] Justin O'Brien, in "From French To English", makes the following observation:

As a translator I am an amateur. So was Jacques Amyot who contributed signally in the Renaissance to forging a French prose style by translating Plutarch; so was Sir Thomas North who in turn translated Amyot so well that even Shakespeare could quote an English Plutarch without amending a word. When John Wyclif worked on the first complete rendering of the Bible into English, he doubtless considered himself an amateur--as his model, Saint Jerome, probably also did after his long labors had produced the Vulgate. (O'Brien in Brower 1959:78)

- [11] According to Michel Paradis:

Weinrich (1953) reported the three types of bilingualism he had described in the literature: what he labels type A (soon to be referred to as *coordinate*) when the signs of each language separately combine in Saussurian terms a unit of expression and one of content; type B (*compound*) when the signs combine one single unit of content with two units of expression, one in each language; and type C (*subordinate*) when the meaning unit is that of the mother tongue, with its corresponding unit of expression in the second language. . . . (Paradis 1978:164)

- [12] Snell-Hornby, for example, laments the fact that there is no restriction for entry into the field.
- [13] Lawrence Humphrey, according to Steiner, is a Puritan divine "of considerable inascibility and learning", who became Master of Magdalen

College, Oxford. Humphrey is the author of the *Interpretatio linguarum: seu de ratione convertendi & explicandi autores tam sacros quam profanos*, a "much less known, but interesting work", printed in Basle in 1559, which Steiner claims gives a complete picture of the standard, medium approach which the humanists advocated in regard to translation.

- [14] Steiner notes that:

Like everyone before him, Humphrey divides translation into three modes: literalism, which he condemns as *puerilis & superstitiosa*, free or licentious adaptation, and the just *via media*. (Steiner 1977:263)

What distinguishes Humphrey's work, according to Steiner, is his definition of the middle way, which "elevates the banalities of compromise to the status of method".

- [15] A translator translating different texts, some to her/his taste, and some not, would most likely betray her/his affinities in the varying quality of the finished products.
- [16] See also Toury (1980), Bassnett-McGuire (1980, 1985), Newmark (1981, 1988) and Van Slype et al. (1983).
- [17] G. K. Chesterton's "Variations of An Air" is "Composed on Having To Appear in a Pageant As Old King Cole"; see Appendix E for the original and the parodied versions.
- [18] Pantun are delivered with the rhythm of speech, and ought not, therefore, lapse into the rhythm of doggerel, which might be abhorrent to some; besides it is too brief for the clippity-clop rhythm to set in. Its brevity also saves it from being monotonous.

- [19] The precursors have shown just how suitable such a rhyme scheme could be.
- [20] Holmes names Fitzgerald's version the *analogical blank verse*, Lattimore's *mimetic hexameters*, and Pound's *organic verse*.
- [21] This is the method of studying translated texts "which determines beforehand a required repertory of features always to be analysed, regardless of what specific text is involved" (Holmes 1978:81).

## CHAPTER VI: PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS II: THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE

I am not going to tell you how to translate, nor am I going to tell you how to tell other people to translate. But I am going to try to tell you why nobody can tell you how to translate . . .

- Andre Lefevere -  
"Literature, Comparative and Translated", in *Babel*

Different reasons for translating, as well as other differences arising from the psycho-sociolinguistic nature of the process mean<sup>d</sup> that, generally, for any text translated, there would be different types of translations possible. Although this is a fact of the process, and accepted by some as such (e.g., Savory 1957, Rose 1981), it is not universally agreed upon. The "historical dichotomy" (Snell-Hornby 1988:26), i.e., the "conflict between free and literal translation" (Bassnett-McGuire 1980:134), has divided the field for so long, that not to take a stand in either direction automatically <sup>implies</sup> ~~involves~~ "critical relativism".[1]

The recognition that there is no single way, i.e., that there are various acceptable ways of translating a text, ought not, however, be taken to imply that there are no 'wrong translations' or 'mistranslations'. The most cursory survey of translated works would show, all too clearly, that there is a difference between the "possible", the 'probable' (to misquote Hofstadter 1980:378), and the "preposterous".[2] and to avoid the occurrence of the last, Translation Studies, especially the pedagogic branch of the discipline, must, when necessary, deign to be 'prescriptive' or 'normative'.[3] Since both terms have negative connotations in the field, perhaps it might prove timely to elaborate on this point.

Translation, as I. A. Richards (1959) explains in "Toward a Theory of Translating", consists of "choices"; and "Initial choices would be free". However, once "choice has been made[.] the sequent choices are bound thereby while the

choice is held". In the context of this study, this is taken to mean that whilst accepting that there are various modes of translating, there is also no denying that for each mode, there are *right* ways and *wrong* ways of doing things. Freedom lies in the choice of the how-factor, and no one (except possibly the commissioner of the translation task)[4] has the right to dictate this choice. Once this choice is made, however, there are rules/conventions that prevail.

Duff (1984:121), for example, in comparing two English translations of Isaac Babel's works, notes that one is nineteenth century in its use of language, while the other is twentieth century. Both, according to Duff, are justifiable, provided that each is consistently so. Consistency is thus a condition to be observed.

Bassnett-McGuire (1980:82) supports Anton Popovic's view that the translator has the right to be independent "provided[, however,] that independence is pursued for the sake of the original in order to reproduce it as a living work". This proviso automatically <sup>implies</sup> infers following some steps while avoiding others.

Matthews (in Graham 1985) is more explicit on the matter. According to him:

translation is determinate only relative to a given psychological theory, so that while for any translator (or group of translators sharing a single psychological theory) there is a uniquely correct translation scheme for any given set of utterances, there is no absolutely correct scheme. (Matthews in Graham 1985:153)

This, Matthews warns, should not be taken to mean that in matters of translation anything goes. Nor, according to Matthew, is anyone deluded in thinking that s/he can distinguish better translation from worse, correct from incorrect; what must be remembered here:

is . . . that correctness in these matters is a local, theory-relative notion. Of course, this locale may be quite large if there happens to be widespread acceptance of a single psychological theory. (Perhaps another way of putting the point would be to say that the notion of correctness is *internal* to the actual practice of translation.) (Matthews in Graham 1985:153-154)

James S. Holmes explains the problem from the perspective of the verse translator:

The poetic criterion entails a demand of unity or homogeneity: a poem, whatever else it may be, can be defined as a coherent textual whole. Yet the fact of translation, by its very nature, entails a basic dichotomy between source and target languages, literatures, and cultures -- a dichotomy with, moreover, a temporal as well as a spatial dimension. To harmonize the demand of unity and the fact of dichotomy, the translator must resort to a game of strategy of illusionism: accepting the dichotomy as inevitable, he must map out a general strategy of selecting from his retentive and re-creative possibilities those which will induce the illusion of unity. At the outset there are few further restrictions. But as the translator moves further into the game, each choice limits further choices: the choice of archaic idiom, for example, tends to prohibit later recourse to contemporary slang, and the choice of a strict rhyme scheme and/or metrical system serves to restrict subsequent lexical and syntactic choices . . . (Holmes 1988:50; emphasis added)

The task of "provid[ing] a set of norms for effecting [a good] translation", (Bassnet-McGuire 1980:37) lies outside the scope of this study. What this chapter hopes to do, instead, is to differentiate between the various modes, "not in order to arrive at a normative dicta: So it must be, and not otherwise", not even to try "to understand the nature of the various kinds of metapoem" (Holmes 1988:30),[5] but merely to examine the *how*-factor, the dependent variable of the definition introduced in Chapter IV, especially in the context of the Malayo-English tradition of verse translation, and then to compare various opinions on the matter.

### **6.1 A SPECTRAL ANALYSIS; PRO-TEM LABELLING**

As Holmes (1988:42) predicts, any attempt at an analysis would necessitate



the evolving of terms. In this section, as many of the components of the translation spectrum as are discernible at the time of study will be named. These (technical) labels are strictly for the purposes of this study and are therefore of a pro-tem nature. Though several new terms will be introduced, as many of the existing terms as are found suitable will be retained, which will be modified if necessary. The system of nomenclature adopted is guided by Newmark's useful reminder (quoted as note [10] of Chapter IV), which is that:

any terms translation theory . . . invents should be 'transparent', i.e. self-explanatory . . . (Newmark 1982:36; emphasis added)

Thus it is proposed that any term which indicates a translation process bear the prefix *trans-*[6]

For example, the translation of the classics for children or modern readers (e.g., A. L. Rowse's rendering of *Hamlet*, 1987) or of technical texts for lay readers, both of which involve the simplification of points in the From-Text could perhaps be called *trans-elucidation*. The term *trans-elucidation* will thus describe one of the pathways along which the translation process could proceed. By definition, *trans-elucidation* is different from *trans-explication*, a process via which the From-Text is explained, but not necessarily simplified, in the translating.

The process in which the translator tries to preserve the tone and style of the original could be labelled *trans-emulation*. This is to be distinguished from *trans-imitation*, whereby the translator makes a deliberate attempt to imitate the style of a master other than the author of the From-Text. Harry Aveling (1986), for example, suggests two models for translating the *pantun*, one after Blake, the other after William Carlos Williams. *Trans-imitation* is also to be distinguished from both imitation as practised in the eighteenth century, which Adams describes

as "systematic mistranslation" which involves:

the reproduction of an original text with contemporary overtones in such a way as to amplify the overtones without altogether abandoning the text . . . (Adams 1973:18)

and imitation as defined by Dryden. Adams names Dr. Johnson's *The Vanity of Human Wishes* as an imitation of Juvenal's tenth *Satire*. Imitation as described here seems to be closer to Dryden's *Paraphrase* than to his *Imitation*, for whilst *Paraphrase* is:

translation with latitude, where the author is kept in view by the translator so as never to be lost, but his words are not so strictly followed as his sense, and that too is admitted to be amplified but not altered . . . (Dryden as quoted in Warren 1909:107)

*Imitation*, on the other hand, is:

where the translator (if now we have not lost that name) assumes the liberty not only to vary from the words and sense, but to forsake them both as he sees occasion, and taking only some general hints from the original to run division on the groundwork as he pleases. (Dryden as quoted in Warren 1909:108)

The term *imitation* seems to have different connotations; to avoid confusing the two and thus to enable a lucid discussion, perhaps new terms might not come amiss here. Perhaps the term *trans-mutation* would be more appropriate for *imitation* as discussed by Adams, as it is able to describe, most aptly, the change (much like that undergone by mutants of modern day science fiction) that has befallen the original,[7] and *trans-creation* for that discussed by Dryden (which will be defined in the section). The medieval practice of *Imitation* (Bassnett-McGuire 1980:53), would seem to incorporate any or all of the acts of *trans-mutation*, *trans-imitation*, *trans-creation* and *trans-implantation* (see below).[8]

Alexander Fraser Tytler (Lord Woodhouselee), in the *Essay on the Principles of Translation* (1791), uses the term /transfusion/ to denote the transference of sense from the From-Text to the To-Text. The term could be revived as *trans-fusion* to denote a trans-process whereby the sense of the original transcends all other features. The translation of difficult technical texts, whether in the Arts, Sciences, Medicine or Philosophy, from one language into another, or from one linguistic state into another (as in the example from Kuhn in the next paragraph), would seem to involve trans-fusion rather than trans-elucidation. Incorporated in the act of trans-fusion would be any or all of the acts of, for example, explanation, description, supplementation and complementation. Trans-fusion in the sense used here is different from that implied in Shelley's famous words:

It were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principle of its colour and odour, as seek to transfuse from one language into another the creations of a poet.  
(Shelley in Tripp 1979:521)

/Transfusion/ as used by Shelley seems to imply the preservation of not only the sense but also the stylistic features of the From-Text, which in the present nomenclature would be trans-emulation.

An example of trans-fusion that comes readily to mind is Jacques Derrida's "Des Tours De Babel", which he claims is a translation of a translation of Walter Benjamin's famous essay, and which also complements Benjamin's writing (in Graham 1985). Another would be the type of translation described in Thomas S. Kuhn's "Postscript" to the second and enlarged edition of *The Structure Of Scientific Revolutions*, the type which, according to Kuhn, would be "a potent tool both for persuasion and for conversion" (Kuhn 1975:202). Kuhn perceives the

need to translate whenever persons who hold "incommensurable viewpoints" have problems in communicating (Kuhn 1975:175).

Adams (1973) writes about "Transplanted Translations" i.e., where poets "stitch translations into the midst of poems otherwise original", as being another product of a trans-process. This process could be included in the spectrum if a term such as "trans-plant" (made popular by modern surgery and which seems to describe it accurately when the medical analogy is referred to), is used to represent it. However, it is proposed to use the term *trans-implantation* (from the field of semi-conductors) here, as it seems to describe the process more accurately. This would leave the term *trans-plantation*, which seems better suited for the description of another trans-process, free to describe that process. Trans-plantation, by which the From-Text is transplanted, in the sense of being uprooted and replanted, could be used to describe the trans-process by which a text is transferred from one cultural state into another, within the same language. The translation of *Beowulf* into modern English, would thus be an example of trans-plantation. Of course, any translation which, according to the PS theory, is a "fact" of the To-System, is, in a sense, trans-planted; thus the term could, alternatively, be used to describe only those translations which are 'accepted' in the To-System (such as Umberto Eco's *The Name Of The Rose*, or Pope's translations of Homer). If the term were used in the second sense, the term *trans-modernisation* could perhaps be introduced to indicate the trans-process which involves the modernisation of a text, whether intralingually or interlingually.

Related to trans-modernisation is *trans-position*: a text could be said to be

trans-posed if it changes its cultural characteristics on translation. The translation of *Romeo And Juliet* into modern English would involve trans-modernisation on the linguistic level, but the translation of the same play into the cultural state of the back-streets of New York or Chicago (as in *West Side Story*), would be a trans-position. Related to both these trans-processes is *trans-naturalization* (a term derived from the term /naturalized/ as used by Immigration Departments, i.e., to become citizens of another country).[9] A text could be said to be trans-naturalized if it changes its 'nationality' on translation, as for example when Macbeth becomes a Japanese Samurai, or when 'nasi' in Malay is translated into 'bread' instead of 'rice' (both being staple foods).[10] The terms trans-position and trans-naturalization could thus be defined so as to distinguish translation across temporal distance (trans-modernization) or across spatial distance (trans-naturalization).

Translation of literary texts in which the From-Text, in order to serve some ends (whether political, social, moral or religious), is 'manipulated' in the translating, is important in the PS (Polysystem) theories of translation. Theo Hermans (1985b) highlights this mode in *The Manipulation of Literature*, and provides a means of describing the trans-process, i.e., via the use of a term such as *trans-manipulation*. Although adaptation is implied in manipulation, it is treated as a different act here: adaptation is considered innocent of intent to manipulate. Acts such as these, which bring about changes without any ulterior motive, could perhaps be labelled *trans-adaptation*, or *trans-modification*, which could be differentiated further, should the need arise.

The translation of theatre texts presents special difficulties (as discussed

in, for example, Brower 1959; Hollander in Brower 1959; Bassnett-McGuire 1978, 1980, 1985 and Wellwarth in Rose 1981). Where the translation seeks to make the play alive/realistic/vivid for the To-Audience, the term *trans-vivification* could perhaps describe the mode/intention/pathway. The term *trans-animation* was considered, but is rejected because of the connotation acquired by the term 'trans-animation' with the creation of Walt Disney cartoon animation.

Other terms which might be considered are *trans-creation*, *trans-metamorphosis* and *trans-formation*. Each of these could prove useful in the translation of poetry; Charles Tomlinson (1983), for example, writes about *Poetry and Metamorphosis*. If *trans-formation* were used to describe the least interesting of the changes that could occur, i.e., the change of form from one genre to another, as for example, from verse to prose, or vice versa, then *trans-metamorphosis* could be used to describe the more intricate changes that occur when one verse form is translated into another, such as Dryden's and Pope's translation of Homer. *Trans-creation* could then be used to describe the *trans-process* whereby, to "turn poesis into poesis" (Denham as quoted in Bassnett-McGuire 1980:58), the translator has need to claim and exercise the poetic license allowed a creator of a work of art, without, however, *trans-forming* or *trans-metamorphosing* the From-Text.

A strictly literal (i.e., word-for-word) translation, or Metaphrase in Dryden's terminology, must also be included in the spectrum. For whilst it is inadequate and/or unacceptable for most purposes, there are times when it will be required, as perhaps when an advertising company requests a word-for-word translation of past advertisements for purposes of analysis. In view of the

different connotations attached to the phrase /literal translation/ (as seen in section 3.3.1), the terms *trans-imaging* and/or *trans-mapping* might perhaps be considered for future use. If trans-mapping were reserved for the general act of word-for-word translation, then trans-imaging could perhaps be used to describe a successful act of trans-mapping: such would be the case when *fidelity-in-literality*, as described by Benjamin, is achieved. Thus trans-imaging is a special case of trans-mapping, possible only when there are perfect equivalences in the To-State.

Then there is the question of 'the translation of a translation . . . of a translation'. In this nomenclature it is found that the term *trans-derivation* (borrowed from mathematics) has possibilities. It draws attention to the fact that the complexities of the translation process might be made to appear 'observable' when stated as a mathematical statement. The first thing that would strike the observer then would be, that there are too many 'unknowns' for simple algebraic rules to apply. The translation product could be phrased mathematically, but only in *function* notation; i.e., that the (T)ranslation (P)roduct (i.e., TP) is a (f)unction of the text (i.e.,  $f(\text{text})$ ), or, in other words, the translation product is dependent on the way each of the independent variables acts on the translation process. Using the term trans-derivation, it can be seen, at a glance, that the (T)rans-(D)erived (P)roduct (i.e. TD<sub>n</sub>P) can be expected to be different from TP. The numerical subscript (n) indicates the number of times the text has been trans-derived. Each trans-derivation would inflict more changes upon the product. This notation is attractive, in that it can hint at, or rather, warn of the changes which can be expected to have occurred, simply by stating that "such and such a

text has been trans-derived  $n$  number of times", and distinguishes clearly between a translation and a translation of a translation. For example, Idries Shah (1964:39), writing on *The Sufis*, records that "There is a translation of a Persian book into English, not from Persian, but from a French translation of an Urdu rendering of a classical Persian abridgement of an Arabic original." The Arab original can be said to have been trans-elucidated, or *trans-abridged*, if this term is more accurate, into the Persian, after which it is trans-derived twice through Urdu and French, into English. The reader's expectation of the end-text would be different from her/his expectation of, for example, a trans-emulation of the original.

The mathematical concept is useful in that it can hint at the complexity of the process and of the relationships between one product and another. In practice, the variables are too complex and abstract to be quantified. Translator attitude, skill, mood and taste might change. Seamus Heaney (in Warren 1989:14-20), for example, describes how his feelings towards an Irish poem he had translated seven years earlier (in 1972), change, compelling him to undertake a fresh translation (in 1979), this time preserving as much of the characteristics of the original, including the rhyme scheme, as was possible. Edward Fitzgerald published five editions of *The Rubaiyat Omar Khayyam*.

With each passing moment, with each experience, conscious or sub-conscious, the translator is transported into a different cultural state. Her/his perception of the text and her/his projection of her/his audience changes accordingly; mathematics cannot be used to obtain earlier products, especially after several trans-derivations by different translators. The mathematical



statements serve to show that translation is not only complex but also *irreversible*, for unlike in the mathematics situation, there are no 'constants' of the equation. The process of back-translating might assist in testing the accuracy of a translation, but might never recover the From-Text.

The trans-processes identified here could be helpful in the macroscopic description of the change the text has undergone, but they are inadequate for a microscopic analysis of translated texts. This is because each trans-process is usually a complex of several basic processes, yet to be identified here. Vinay and Darbelnet (1958), for example, as reported in Van Slype et al. (1983), suggest seven "distinct methods of translating", dependent on the nature of the difficulty encountered, namely:

- the word-for-word method . . .
- copy, i.e. transposition of a construction in one language into the other . . .
- loan, i.e. the incorporation in the language of a word taken from another language . . .
- transposition, i.e. restitution of one part of a speech by another . . .
- modulation, i.e. taking account of difference in approach from one language to the other . . .
- equivalence, i.e. translation of a concept by a similar concept . . .
- adaptation, i.e. restitution of a situation unknown to the target language by reference to an analogous situation . . . (Van Slype et al. 1983:34)

Joseph L. Malone names nine trajectories, or elementary translational patterns into which a given source-target text pairing may partially be resolved, of which the first eight pair off under generics. The nine trajectories are:

1. Equation, i.e. "pairing of the most straight-forward source and target language counterparts";
2. Substitution, which is "antipodal to Equation in that the target form is decidedly not the target language's most straight-forward counterpart of the source text form";
3. Divergence, i.e. where "an element of the source text . . . may be mapped onto any of two or more alternatives in the target text";
4. Convergence, which is "the mirror image to Divergence";

5. Amplification, i.e. where "the target picks up a translational element in addition to a Matching counterpart of the source language";
6. Reduction, the inverse of Amplification, is where "a source expression is partially trajected onto a target counterpart and partially omitted";
7. Diffusion, where "a source element is unpacked or spread out in the target text";
8. Condensation, which is "the mirror image of Diffusion"; and
9. Reordering, i.e. where "one or more target elements appear in a position different from that of the source text".  
(Malone in *Babel* 1/1986:13)

Mildred L. Larson (1984:17), in the chapter on "Kinds of Translation" describes a continuum ranging from the "very literal", through the "literal", the "modified literal", the "inconsistent mixture", the "near idiomatic", the "idiomatic" (which is supposed to be the "translator's goal"), to the "unduly free".[11]

In *Translating Poetry: Seven Strategies and A Blueprint*, Lefevere (1975) names some of the steps that could be taken in the translation of verse. The preservation of the sounds of the From-Text, for example, would lead to phonemic translation whilst the preservation of the sense of the words of the From-Text would lead to literal translation. Other features of the From-Text that the translator might find desirable to preserve are the metre and the rhyme. Lefevere adopts the Dryden concept of imitation.

A point which needs to be emphasised here is that, as Snell-Hornby points out:

The vast majority of texts are in fact hybrid forms, multi-dimensional structures with a blend of sometimes seemingly conflicting features: Shakespeare's sonnets contain technical terminology of his day, while modern economic texts abound in lexicalized metaphor, and advertisements . . . are characterized by the varying methods they use to present information. (Snell-Hornby 1988:31)

The hybrid nature of most texts means that several processes are involved in the translation of any one text. The trans-elucidation of Homer, for example, might involve any number of the basic processes identified by the authors above.

The mode of any particular translation, when it needs to be specified, will have to be that of the dominant trans-process, which in turn will be decided by the intention of the translator. At times, the mode will be obvious to the reader, as in trans-manipulation and trans-elucidation, but there are times when the mode is clear only to the translator. For example, had Aveling not identified his mode of translating, his trans-imitation of Blake or William Carlos Williams in translating the *pantun* might easily have been mistaken for trans-creation ('free' translation), or even parody.

A translation involving several trans-processes will also be difficult to describe--if, for example, Homer's *Odyssey* were transformed into the prose of James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Here trans-formation and trans-imitation, among other trans-processes, would have taken place. The mode of the translation would have to be that which is specified by the translator, for only s/he would know which mode governed her/his "sequent choices" (I. A. Richards 1959).

The last illustration shows that although labelling the trans-processes enables a slightly more detailed discussion of a translation, a lot more needs to be done to enable a systematic analysis. Labelling at both the basic and modal levels would have to be rigorously systematized: a comparison of Vinay and Darbelnet's "methods" and Malone's "trajectories" shows that the "word-for-word" method is not as simple as made out; in the ideal case, it would correspond to Malone's "Equation", but, in practice, polysemy and homonymy in a From-Word and/or a

To-Word would mean that any attempt to translate by matching "word-for-word" could lead not only to "Equation", but also to some of the other "trajectories" specified by Malone. It might prove helpful, too, to distinguish (by appropriate labelling, perhaps) between basic/elementary and complex/compound processes in translation.

### 6.1.1 *Postscript*

Among the many points raised in Bassnett-McGuire's *Translation Studies* (1980) is the need for "more general theoretical discussion as to the *nature* of translation" and the need "for an accessible terminology with which to engage in such discussion" (Bassnett-McGuire 1980:82). That there is such a need is demonstrated in the chapter on "Specific Problems of Literary Translation".

For example, in discussing Lefevere's strategies for the translation of poetry, Bassnett-McGuire disagrees with Lefevere's use of the term *version* to describe one of the two translation products of the strategy of *Interpretation* (the other being *imitation*). 'Versions' are obtained when the substance of the From-Text is retained but the form is changed. According to Bassnett-McGuire:

Lefevere's use of the term *version* is rather misleading, for it would seem to imply a distinction between this and translation, taking as the basis for the argument a split between form and substance. (Bassnett-McGuire 1980:82)

In the nomenclature introduced above, a version as used here is a trans-formation, which, being a trans-process, supports Popovic's view that 'the translator has the right to differ organically' (as quoted in Bassnett-McGuire 1980:82).

Bassnett-McGuire's report on J. P. Sullivan's discussion of Pound's *Homage to Sextus Propertius*, provides insight into the nature of translation which is doubly interesting. Firstly, it is noted here that, for Pound's critics to have

mistaken his *Homage* for a translation implies that trans-processes have been at work in the production of the piece. Pound's mention of including a 'parodied line from Yeats' hints at trans-implantation and/or trans-imitation at least. Secondly, Pound's distinction between his translation and his *Homage* means that, as Bassnett-McGuire points out, Pound had very precise ideas about what a translation is. It would be interesting to find out in section 6.2, what some of these ideas might be, and to see which, if any, of the trans-processes named above would correspond to Pound's notion of translation.

### 6.1.2 Modes Of Translating In The Malayo-English Tradition

As seen earlier, translators of the Malayo-English Tradition have translated in at least five different modes, ranging from trans-mapping, trans-emulation, trans-imitation, trans-metamorphosis and trans-fusion, through to trans-creation. In section 1.3.1, it is seen that except for Maxwell and Swettenham who trans-fuse, the other precursors mostly trans-emulate, as seen in the translations by Clifford, Winstedt, Wilkinson, Hamilton, Caldecott and Humphreys. Harrison, in verse [1.4a], trans-metamorphoses the *pantun* form into a quatrain with an *a-a-b-b* rhyme scheme.

Of the perpetuators, most of the translators of modern Malay verse, as admitted by James Kirkup (in Rice and Abdullah 1963), trans-map by intention; trans-imaging, if any, is thus incidental. Aveling trans-imitates in the translation of *pantun*, trans-metamorphosing the *pantun* form in the process, but, as seen in his translation of A. Ghafar's "Lapangan Ya-Ya-Ya" (in Chapter 11), seems to be inclined to trans-create modern Malay verse. Dailijie and Haanah both attempt to trans-emulate.

### **6.2 PERSPECTIVES ON THE HOW-FACTOR; POUND'S VIEWS**

The "how to" of translation is well discussed in many sources (see, for example, Newmark 1981, 1988).[12] There are, however, some aspects left that need to be examined more closely. For example, a study of the literature which deals with the how-factor shows that although, theoretically, translators are free to choose from amongst the various modes, whether at the macro- or the micro-levels, in practice, some of these modes are sanctioned while others are not. Research shows that because of prevailing canons, following these unsanctioned paths breeds anxiety and/or embarrassment; and this, as Quirk points out in Chapter III, could affect the process adversely. The matter of rhymes, for example, could be a problem for translators of traditional Malay verse into English.

To clear these pathways for translators of the Malayo-English tradition, and thus to reduce the number of the 'anxious', this study agrees with Wallace Stevens that:

*The essential thing in form is to be free in whatever form is used. A free form does not assure freedom. As a form, it is just one more form. So that it comes to this, I suppose, that I believe in freedom regardless of form. (Stevens 1937, as quoted in Bartlett's Familiar Quotations 1980:769; emphasis added)*

The absence of 'pioneering' work in the tradition makes it necessary for this study to draw upon like experiences in other traditions. For example, a comparison shows that the problems encountered in the translation of Malay verse into English are similar to those described in Holmes' essays, "Poem and Metapoem: Poetry from Dutch into English" (Holmes 1988:9-22), and "Forms of Verse Translation and the Translation of Verse Form" (Holmes 1988:23-37; also

in Holmes 1970:195-201).

In the first essay, defining a "metapoem" as "the poem intended as a translation of a poem into another language", Holmes identifies "the impediments to appropriate decision-making in the process of creating a metapoem in the one specific language, English, on the basis of a poem in another specific language, Dutch". Although English and Dutch are closely related languages, and Malay and English are not, the translation here is from an LLD into a major language, and problems in the two traditions overlap.

The first impediment identified is linguistic interference. Although the example cited is that which is found between closely related languages, the problem would, generally, be present in all translation. As Holmes explains:

A root problem of all translation is the fact that the semantic field of a word, the entire complex network of meanings it specifies, never matches exactly the semantic field of any one word in any other language. (Holmes 1988:9)

In closely related languages, as Holmes demonstrates, this interference is manifest in the way form is matched to form regardless of meaning, in the intrusion of From-Language vocabulary and syntax in the To-Language and the contamination of semantic areas (Holmes 1988:12).

The second impediment is interesting as it is "particular to translation from little-translated languages", which Malay is. Holmes reports that according to Rabin, "the more and the longer translations are made from language A to language B, the easier it becomes to translate from A to B".[13] due to the accumulation of a "translation stock". Holmes observes that:

On the level of literary translation, the translator from Dutch to English has almost invariably had to start from scratch, working outside a tradition and finding (her)/his own solutions as [s]/he went along.

(Holmes 1988:13; emphasis added)

This is similar to the situation faced by translators in the Malayo-English 'tradition'. Holmes identifies a third and similar impediment, which derives from the position of little-known literature. Holmes compares translated Dutch poems to translated German and French poems (these being products of an established tradition), and observes that:

Concomitant with an absence of a translation tradition is a lack of knowledge of the literary background against which a poem translated from Dutch should be read when it appears. A rendering into English of a poem by Georg Trakl or Apollinaire falls into (or perhaps contradicts) a general pattern of German or French poetry already available to the English poetry reader. A rendering of a poem by, say, Paul van Ostaïjen must stand by itself, isolated both from the remainder of Van Ostaïjen's work and from the entire body of Dutch poetry. This means that the translator of a poem by Van Ostaïjen has to approach his task in quite a different way from the translator of Trakl or Apollinaire. (Holmes 1988:14)

(This is very interesting to the study, as it shows that precursors such as Wilkinson and Humphreys, as seen in Chapter I, and perpetuators such as Daillie and Goudie, as seen in Chapter II, are aware of this problem and try to provide as detailed an account as possible of the background of the poem.)

According to Holmes, how the translator approaches the problem is "determined to some extent by yet another set of problems, those that are specific to the translation of poetry into English, from whatever language" (Holmes 1988:14). As this is highly pertinent to the study, Holmes' words will be quoted extensively here:

Some of these problems are fairly constant, and have to do with the nature of the English Language; I shall mention three of them.

One is the fact that English contains an extraordinarily high proportion of monosyllabic words, a proportion that moreover is highest of all among the words most frequently used. A second problem, partly a result of the first, is the shifting, loose accent of English, which for the



poet makes various metres all but impossible, and others possible only by dint of a high degree of tension between hypothetical metre and actual rhythm. A third problem is the dearth of true rhymes. . . . Italian, in contrast, has a large repertoire of words available to rhyme with . . . Each of these three linguistic facts constitutes a formidable obstacle to any attempt at carrying over outward form from the foreign poem to the English metapoem. (Holmes 1988:14)

The first problem is acutely felt in the translation of Malay verse into English; but because it is similar to the problem faced by the translator translating from Greek and Latin into English (see for example, Humphries in Brower 1959), translators of the tradition could learn from these older traditions.

Of the second problem, it is interesting to note other opinions on the matter, such as that given by Barbara Reynolds (in Radice and Reynolds eds. 1987:131-132). According to Reynolds:

It is often said that English is a language poor in rhyme compared with Italian. Consequently it is held that any attempt to translate *terza rima* into triple rhyme or *ottava rima* into rhymed octaves must end in failure. But what English lacks is not rhymes but pure vowel sounds. It is remarkably rich in diphthongs, which produce perfectly legitimate impure rhymes, of a far greater range and variety than Italian can command. (Reynolds 1987:131)

Reynolds admits to having had the same impression earlier:

Dorothy L. Sayers pointed this out in the introduction to her translation of *Inferno*, but so powerful is the voice of received wisdom which echoes down the centuries that the myth is perpetuated. I am guilty myself of having added to it, unthinkingly, in a foreword to my translation of *La Vita Nuova*, where I said, 'English is less rich in rhyme than Italian.' I was hiding behind a time-honoured excuse for not having done better. When I came to translate Ariosto I was obliged to eat my words. . . .

In self-defence I must add that T. S. Eliot said much the same: 'English is less copiously provided with rhyming words than Italian . . .' But he goes on to add:

. . . those rhymes we have are in a way more emphatic. (Reynolds 1987:131)

The problem with rhymes in English, according to Reynolds is that:

English rhymes are preponderantly masculine. Consequently they tend to

be more noticeable than Italian rhymes, since Italian is a language in which feminine endings are the norm. In English, feminine rhymes are reserved for special purposes, for lingering effects, for instance, or for humour. (Reynolds 1987:132)

As stated earlier, the question of rhyme is important in the translation of those traditional Malay verse forms which are defined by their rhyme scheme, and so will be examined closely here. Although there is no law against the use of rhymes, and although most translation theorists deny prescribing laws of any kind, the act of rhyming is felt to be frowned upon. Statements such as the following, whilst not stating anything explicitly, could be taken to imply this:

A work of literature will be made accessible to a new audience only if it is translated into the stage of literary evolution that audience is in. (Lefevere in Holmes et al. 1978:22)

Rhymes (and inversions etc.) belong to "a previous stage of literary evolution", to 'pre-Pound days', and would therefore be deemed outmoded. The feeling that rhymes are taboo seems to be pervasive, and strong, so that one translator who feels the effect becomes apologetic when rhyming, as can be seen here. James or "Jim" Holmes admits to having an alter ego, Jacob Lowland, who "believes in doing all sorts of crazy things" (Holmes in Weissbort 1989:58), and describes the conflicting sentiments between his two selves with regards to the translation of Marial:

Now when I translated, when Jim Holmes translated, Catullus, he felt that using rhyme for Latin poetry, for classical poetry in general, was barbaric. Well it is! Rhyme came into European poetry in the early Middle Ages, from India by way of Persian and Islamic poetry. And I've always felt that we really shouldn't use it when translating classical poetry. However, I was led - not I, in this case, because these poems were translated by Jacob Lowland! - Jacob Lowland was misled, perhaps, in the first place, by this beautiful seventeenth-century neo-classical couplet pattern. Now Jacob Lowland, unlike Jim Holmes, loves to rhyme, and so he had a lot of fun doing this. And at a certain point I became convinced that probably rhyme is the right vehicle for dealing with these very taut,

witty epigrams of Martial, quite different from the poetry of Catullus. (Holmes in Weissbort 1989:64)

Holmes' words ~~some~~ how recall the description of Mahony's anti-tradition activities of translating from English (his native tongue) into other languages, as "mystifications in the form of invented 'originals' in French, Latin, Greek" (section 3.2.1). The tussle between Holmes and his alter ego Jacob Lowland would seem to be a tussle between wanting to cater to prevailing norms and tastes, and wanting to obey intuition, for, the next set of problems he deals with has to do "with the expectations of readers" for poetry in English. Holmes quotes Brower as his reference:

As Reuben Brower has indicated, "The average reader of a translation in English wants to find the kind of experience which has become identified with 'poetry' in his readings of English literature. The translator who wishes to be read must in some degree satisfy this want." Must satisfy it, that is to say, even though the poem he is translating, conforming as it does to the kind of experience which has become identified with poetry in another tradition, may be of a quite different nature. (Holmes 1988:14)

He explains the difficulties:

How restrictive that want may be is exemplified by a recent statement of W. H. Auden's:

... my own conviction is that in this age poetry ... can no longer be written in the High, even in the Golden Style, only in a Drab Style ... By a Drab Style I mean a quiet tone of voice and a modesty of gesture which deliberately avoids drawing attention to itself as poetry with a capital P. Whenever a modern poet raises his voice he makes me feel embarrassed ... (Holmes 1988:14)

Holmes' quotation of Auden, which is an excerpt from "The World of Opera" is interesting; Auden's words seem to be an articulation of Ezra Pound's principles for writing modern poetry. Auden's own translation, however, for example that of *The Lay of Völund* (translated with Paul B. Taylor), would show that he does not seem to apply these rules to his translations.[14] There is

certainly nothing of the Drab Style in these lines:

Long he sat till asleep he fell;  
What he knew when he woke was not joy  
He saw on his hands heavy chains,  
His feet in fetters were fast bound.

\* \* \*

'Was there not gold on Grani's Road?  
Far thought I our realm from the Rhine hills.  
Greater the treasure we had in olden days,  
At home in the hall, happy together, . . .  
(Auden 1968:57)

A survey of Ezra Pound's translations shows that Pound himself seems to be guilty of inconsistency: for, unlike his translations from the Chinese, which (according to Lefevere 1981:56) he "enlisted in the militant cause of Imagism", his translations from European (French, Italian and Old English) sources would seem to be inconsistent with his principles for modernising poetry. As seen in section 6.2.1, above, Pound seems to have very definite ideas about what is translation and what is not, but when his translations from European sources are compared to his translations from Chinese, Pound appears to be applying two different sets of translating rules, one of them in opposition to his rules for the modernisation of poetry.

Pound has been accredited with changing the translation landscape, and his influence appears to be immense. Holmes, for example, when writing of the choices open to the translator, mentions "the followers of Ezra Pound, who in this century advocate 'making it new' by means of 'creative translation'" (Holmes 1988:48). Elsewhere, though the Poundian principles are not explicitly laid out, it is noted that whenever Pound is mentioned in the 'translator's note', the translation acquires a style which is consistent with the attempt to modernise (see,

for example, C. H. Sisson's non-rhyming translation of Dante).

Like Holmes, André Lefevere also seems to be of the opinion that Pound deliberately set out to modernise translation, and, although not explicitly stated, a survey of Lefevere's writings would show the influence of Poundian principles at work. The following statement, for example, implies compliance with the edicts of modern trend in poetry/translation:

It is . . . quite obvious that a work of literature will be made accessible to a new audience only if it is translated into the stage of literary evolution that audience is in. Nobody doubts that "evolution becomes more and more irreversible as it goes on" (Dobzhansky . . . ) - nobody, that is, except translators of literature who continue their efforts at trying to impose procedures from a previous stage of literary evolution on the present stage. (Lefevere in Holmes et al. 1978:22; emphasis added)

In "Beyond the Process: Literary Translation in Literature and Literary Theory", is the following observation, which merits a close analysis:

Translations of literary works are often used as weapons in the struggle between the canonized and non-canonized tendencies within the polysystem, a struggle which is often a matter of prestige. By the very fact of canonization, the reigning trend in the polysystem possesses great prestige at a given time - great enough, it would seem, to overshadow most, if not all challengers. The latter's problem is to produce literary works that are equally prestigious in support of the alternative poetics they propose. Almost by definition, these works will not be found inside the reigning literature. They will therefore have to be imported from outside the polysystem. This strategy not only confers prestige, but also relative immunity: the foreign work, having been produced outside the native polysystem, cannot really be judged by native standards, precisely because it presents an alternative to them.

It is interesting to note, in this context, that the polysystem hypothesis alone can make sense of the many pseudo-translations that tend to be published when the canonized branch of literature does not produce "great works" any longer, but when critics who act as its apologists do, nonetheless, rigidly stick to its principles, as . . . for example . . . [when] Ezra Pound enlisted classical Chinese poetry in the militant cause of Imagism. (Lefevere in Rose 1981:56; emphasis added)

The emphasised lines in this excerpt, which seem to contradict the emphasised lines in the previous excerpt quoted are interesting, for they echo

Pound's (1920) sentiments on translation, as, for example, could be gathered from his comments on his translation of *Arnaut Daniel*:

The translations are a make-shift; it is not to be expected that I can do in ten years what it took two hundred troubadours a century and a half to accomplish; for the full blending there is no substitute for the original; but in extenuation of the language of my verses, I would point out that the Provençal were not constrained by the modern literary sense. Their restraints were the tune and rhyme-scheme, they were not constrained by a need for certain qualities of writing, without which no modern poem is complete or satisfactory. They were not competing with De Maupassant's prose. Their triumph is, as I have said, in an art between literature and music; if I have succeeded in indicating some of the properties of the latter I have also let the former go by the board. It is quite possible that if the troubadours had been bothered about 'style', they would not have brought their blend of word and tune to so elaborate a completion. (Pound 1985:115-116)

Elsewhere, Pound (1934) makes the same observation. His analysis of Binyon's translation of Dante and of the prosody of Dante is worth a close scrutiny:

The devil of translating medieval poetry into English is that it is very hard to decide HOW you are to render work done with one set of criteria in a language NOW subject to different criteria.

Translate the church of St Hilaire of Poitiers into Barocco?

You can't, as anyone knows, translate it into the English of the period . . . .

Latin word obeyed the laws for dynamics of inflected language, but in 1190 and in 1300, the language of the highbrows was still very greatly Latin. The concept of word order in uninflected or very little inflected language had not developed to anything like twentieth-century straightness. Binyon makes a very courageous statement, and a sound one: 'melodious smoothness is not the characteristic of Dante's verse'. . . .

Dante wrote his poems to MAKE PEOPLE THINK, just as definitely as Swinbourne wrote a good deal of his poetry to tear the pants off the Victorian era and to replace the Albert Memorial by Lampascus.

*The style for a poem written to that end, or in translation of same, differs from the style suited to a 3000 dollar magazine story in the wake of de Maupassant.* (Pound 1985:203-204; emphasis added)

Pound is aware of how the modernisation of the language of poetry (which he himself effected) might affect future readings of translation--of how, in fact,

his "chickens might have come home to roost":

A younger generation, or at least a younger American generation, has been brought up on a list of acid tests, invented to get rid of the boiled oatmeal consistency of the bad verse of 1900, and there is no doubt that many young readers seeing Binyon's inversions, etc., will be likely to throw down the translation under the impression that it is incompetent.

The fact that this idiom, which was never spoken on sea or land, is NOT fit for use in the new poetry of 1933-4 does not mean that it is unfit for use in a translation of a poem finished in 1321.

\* \* \*

At the start the constant syntactical inversions annoy one. Later one gets used to the idiom and forgets to notice them. (Pound 1985:206-208; emphasis added)

The emphasised lines represent Pound's stand on the translation of ancient works. The following enigmatic lines suggest what his opinion on the translation of foreign (non-occidental) works might be:

Before flying to the conclusion that certain things are 'against the rules' (heaven save us, procedures are already erected into RULES!) let the neophyte consider that a man cannot be in New York and Pekin at the same moment. Certain qualities are in OPPOSITION to others, water cannot exist as water and as ice at the same time. (Pound 1985:206)

The most direct reference to his strategies in translating is found in Pound's discussion of *Cavalcanti*, which, according to the footnote on page 149, "must be dated 1910-1931":

As to the atrocities of my translation, all that can be said in excuse is that they are, I hope, for the most part intentional, and committed with the aim of driving the reader's perception further into the original than it would without them have penetrated. The melodic structure is properly indicated--and for the first time--by my disposition of the Italian text, but even that firm indication of the rhyme and the articulation of the strophe does not stress all the properties of Guido's triumph in sheer musicality

\* \* \*

One must strive almost at any cost to avoid a sort of mealy mumbling almost universally tolerated in English. If English verse undulates the average ear tolerates it, or even welcomes it, though the undulation be but as a wobble of bread-dough, utterly non-cantabile, even when not wholly unspeakable.

I have not given an English 'equivalent' for the *Donna mi Pregha*; at the utmost I have provided the reader, unfamiliar with old

**Italian, an instrument that may assist him in gauging some of the qualities of the original.** (Pound 1985:172)

This supports Bassnett-McGuire's analysis of Poundean strategies, as for example, evidenced in his translation of *The Seafarer*:

a close comparison between the original and his translation of *The Seafarer* reveals an elaborate set of word games that show the extent of his knowledge of Anglo-Saxon rather than his ignorance of that language.

... In an attempt to arrive at some idea of what criteria are employed in both versions, the following table provides a rough guide:

\*\*\*

- (1) Free-verse format.
- (2) Illusion of preservation of Anglo-Saxon stress pattern broken by irregular lines in TL text.
- (3) Complex patterns of alliteration set up superficially similar to original.
- (4) Attempt at mock-Germanic syntax-inversion, compounded words, archaisms ...
- (5) No attempt to modernize language, resulting in poem where language and syntax are consistently archaic and 'strange'.

\*\*\*

- (8) Poem attempts to show individual in a world-system distanced in time, space and values.
- (9) Poem attempts to provide 'flavour' of Anglo-Saxon verse through fiction of reproducing Anglo-Saxon form, language and sound patterns in TL. (Bassnett-McGuire 1980:98-99)

Nothing thus far seems to indicate that Pound advocates modernisation in translation. But then, there is the matter of the translations from the Chinese, which, as Lefevere points out, assists Pound in modernizing the language of poetry. The apparent inconsistency in Pound's translation strategies (as evident from a comparison of his translations of *Cavalcanti*, *The Seafarer* and *Arnaut Daniel* on the one hand, and his translations of the Chinese on the other), leads Lefevere to classify him amongst:

those [translators] who tend to think of themselves as writers rather than critics or theorists, not only to make a foreign work available within their own literary polysystem, but also as a contribution to the cause of an embattled (or even victorious) literary trend. Hence, of course, the many and radical fluctuations of style in this type of translated literature. (Lefevere 1981:57)



The description, following on the earlier observation that "Ezra Pound enlisted classical Chinese poetry in the militant cause of Imagism", would seem to fit Pound. Lefevere distinguishes another class of translators of literature:

those who do not produce translations for the dual purpose mentioned above, but simply to make foreign works available, to give readers who are not familiar with the language of the original the materials needed for their own concretization of the text. (Lefevere 1981:57)

Lefevere's summing up of the differences between the two groups is interesting:

Ideally, their [i.e., the second group's] mental constitutions display the "union of translator and literary scientist, of recreative artist and universally educated scholar." [(Andreas Huyssen 1969:120)] They, in other words, know the "more" a translator of literature has to know, whereas the first type of translator often does not, or to a very fragmentary extent only. (Lefevere 1981:57; emphasis added)

If Lefevere did classify Pound amongst the first group, then his summing up of the capabilities of Ezra Pound (see emphasised lines in the last quotation) contradicts that of Bassnett-McGuire, who comments that:

The reader may not *like* . . . Ezra Pound's mock-Anglo-Saxon poetry . . . but no one can argue that the translation products were not the result of a carefully determined concept of translation, conceived with a precise function in mind. (Bassnett-McGuire 1980:104)

What seems to be the cause of the conflicting opinions is the apparently glaring inconsistency in Pound's translating strategies. However, it is maintained here that there is no such inconsistency, and that, as Bassnett-McGuire points out, Pound consistently observes "a carefully determined concept of translation"; and that, in fact, despite his use of the translation from the Chinese to help in the cause of modernising the language in English poetry, Pound belongs to the second group that Lefevere describes. What happened in the case of the translations from the Chinese is that, as Bassnett-McGuire observes of other cases:[15]

by choosing to retain, rather than replace, the form of the SL text, the translator encouraged a new form to enter the TL system . . . (Bassnett-McGuire 1980:105)

The truth of the matter is that, Pound's translation of the Chinese is 'modern' not because he modernised the language in translation, but because, Chinese, in the first place, is modern. Perhaps, the following excerpt from Rudolf Flesch's *How To Write, Speak And Think More Effectively* would explain this:

Chinese . . . is known as a "grammarless" tongue. . . . maybe you think this must be the most primitive, uncivilized language of the world. It would be a common error: up to about fifty years ago all language experts agree that Chinese is the "baby talk of mankind". They were wrong: it is the most grown-up talk in the world. It is the way people speak who started to simplify their language thousands of years ago and have kept at it ever since.

For, thanks to research, we know now that thousands of years ago the Chinese language had case endings, verb forms, and a whole arsenal of unpleasant grammar. It was a cumbersome, irregular, complicated mess, like most other languages. But the Chinese people, generation after generation, changed it into a streamlined, smooth-running machine for expressing ideas. This isn't just a figure of speech: the main principle of modern Chinese is exactly the same as that of modern machinery. It consists of standardized, prefabricated, functionally designed parts. (Flesch 1960:14)

Flesch's next words give a hint of what might have happened in Pound's translation of the Chinese:

So, if we look for a recipe for modern plain English, we find ourselves in a peculiar spot: we could try to imitate seventeenth-century English, but that would sound impossibly old-fashioned; or we could try to approach some future "Chinese" English, but that would sound impossibly modernistic. (Flesch 1960:24)

The matter of 'what Pound really said about translation' is treated in some detail here as it is realised that, as shown above, Pound might have been misinterpreted: his prescriptions for the writing of modern poetry might have been mistaken for his views on translating, which, as could be gathered from his words, are two separate rulings. Poundian 'rules'--as perceived and/or assumed by his

followers, rather than as he set them out--have dictated modern translation, and might not be the best thing that could happen to translation, especially from an LLD (see Rothenberg and Rothenberg 1983).[16]

Perhaps Seamus Heaney's experience would make this clearer. Seamus Heaney (in Warren 1989:14-20), as mentioned earlier, describes how his feelings towards an Irish poem he had translated seven years earlier (in 1972), change, compelling him to undertake a fresh translation (in 1979), this time preserving as much of the characteristics of the original, including the rhyme scheme, as was possible. (O'Keefe's translation, which is referred to in the quotation, is a faithful rendering of the original.) According to Heaney:

First time around, I went at work speedily and a little overbearingly. I was actually taking off from O'Keefe's parallel translation more than I was attending to the Irish itself. I was afraid that I might not finish the whole thing, so in order to forestall as far as possible the let-down of such failure, I hurled myself at the task. My main task . . . day by day, was to keep up an animated rate of production. I could not afford to dwell upon any single eddy of difficulty or subtlety in case it slowed me down to a discouraging rate. Consequently, the first draft was mostly in free verse, bowling along in the malleable quatrains that had become a habit . . .

First time around, I was also far more arrogant in my treatment of the verse. That is to say, I arrogated to myself the right to follow suggestions in the original, to develop a line of association out of the given elements of the Irish rather than set down an obedient equivalent. I allowed myself to import echoes from the English literary tradition, from the Bible, to perform in metaphor what the text delivered in statement. O'Keefe, for example, gave the following direct translation of part of a typical Sweeney lament:

Though I be as I am to-night,  
there was a time  
when my strength was not feeble  
over a land that was not bad.

In 1972, however, I was in no mood to follow the drab, old-fashioned lead of this kind of thing. It became a much more jacked-up performance altogether:

Though I am Lazarus,  
there was a time

when I dressed in purple  
and they fed from my hand.

\*\*\*

Lowell's example was operative here. His trick of heightening the sense by adding voltage to the diction and planting new metaphors into the circuit was not lost on me. Nor was his unabashed readiness to subdue the otherness of the original to his own autobiographical neediness. . . . I cuffed the original with a brusqueness and familiarity that was not earned but that gave me immense satisfaction. I was using *Buile Suibhne* as a trampoline: I should have been showing it off, but instead it was being pressed into service to show me off.

Naturally, I did not feel this from day to day as I went baling through the stanzas. But I did have a nagging sense that the freedoms being exercised were not going to yield an integrated work. Riff by riff, it felt good, but there was no sense, as the pages piled up, of "thoughts long knitted to a single thought." . . .

I cannot remember when I got the idea that the stanzas should be re-cast in a more hard-edged, pointed way; that they should have the definition of hedges in a winter sunset; that they should be cold, definite, and articulated; should rhyme or ring; should be tuned to a chaste, bare note; should be more constricted and ascetic; more obedient to the metrical containments and batten-down verbal procedures of the Irish itself. At any rate, it was in 1979, after my first semester at Harvard, that I suddenly started one morning to reshape stanzas from scratch, rhyming them and keeping my eyes as much to the left, on the Irish, as to the right, on O'Keefe's unnerving trot.

It was this closer inspection of the thickets of the Irish that made the second stint a different kind of engagement. Instead of the energy being generated by hurry and boldness, a certain intensity gathered through the steadier, more lexically concentrated gaze at individual words. Instead of the rhythmic principle being one of lanky, enjambed propulsion, the lines hurdling along for fear they might seize up, the unit of composition now became the quatrain itself, and the metrical pattern became more end-stopped and boxed in.

The . . . lines I quoted earlier sounded now both more literal and more limited within the stanza-shape:

Far other than to-night,  
far different my plight  
the times when with firm hands  
I ruled over a good land. (Heaney in Warren 1989:16-19)

The question of whether to rhyme or not, is important in the translation of traditional Malay verse, and therefore needs to be closely examined here. In 1913, Pound commented thus: "Of the uses and abuses of rhyme I would say nothing, save that it is neither a necessity nor a taboo" (Pound 1985:92); in his

discourse on Cavalcanti (1910-1931): "I do not think rhyme-aesthetic, any rhyme-aesthetic, can ever do as much damage to English verse as that done by latinization, in Milton's time and before. The rhyme pattern is, after all, a matter of chiselling, and a question of the *lima amorosa*, whereas latinization is a matter or compost, and in the very substance of the speech" (Pound 1985:169). Pound (1920) delights in the methods of rhyming introduced by Arnaut Daniel:

by making song in *rimas escarsas* he let into Provençal poetry many words that are not found elsewhere and maybe some words half Latin, and he uses many more sounds on the rhyme, for . . . he uses ninety-eight rhyme sounds in seventeen canzos . . . he does not use the rhyme-*atage* and many other common rhymes of the provençal, whereby so many canzos are all made alike and monotonous on the sound or two sound to the end from the beginning. (Pound 1985:109-110)

As can be gathered from his translations and his words, "Pound's skill as a translator [is] matched by his perceptiveness as critic and theorist" (Bassnett-McGuire 1980:74). All things considered, Pound seems to conform to the ideal translator described by Lefevere, whose "mental constitutions display the 'union of translator and literary scientist, of recreative artist and universally educated scholar' (Andreas Huyssen 1969:120 as quoted in Lefevere 1981:57), who, in other words, knows the "more" a translator of literature has to know, "whose work is both more valuable and more scientific than that of critics, since they simply make readings of the work (even though, as with the model, a reading is implicit in the choices they make in their translations), thereby keeping their distance from the wilder fringes of polyinterpretability" (Lefevere 1981:57). As such, whatever Pound has to say on the subject might prove significant to the development of the discipline.

Analysis of Pound's translated works shows that he favours trans-emulation

or rather, to him, translation is trans-emulation ; his 'followers' seem to favour anything but. The case of Jacob Lowland, above, shows that to enable those wishing to trans-emulate to do so without harbouring any *anxious* feelings (see Chapter III for Quirk's explanation of term and for adverse effects of anxiety), Pound's views on the matter ought to be reappraised. At the moment, the sentiment which prevails seems to be that of Lefevre's (as quoted earlier), where:

the metapoem, if it is to achieve an effect as a poem in English, must satisfy certain requirements that may be alien to the original poem, and the metapoet has the choice of yielding to them, abandoning his translation, or keeping it in his drawer until the taste may change. (Holmes 1988:15)

However, Seamus Heaney's words, and Holmes' sentiments on the matter, as expressed in Weissbord (1989:64-65), suggest that although the taste in certain (dominant) quarters might remain unchanged, there is room for variety. The translator who wishes to trans-emulate need not despair of finding a publisher for her/his translations. The recent publication of Reynold A. Nicholson's *Translations Of Eastern Poetry And Prose* would seem to suggest that there is room for the translator who does not "translate into the stage of literary evolution that [her/his] audience is in".[17] This would seem to support Alvin Toffler's observation, in *Future Shock*, that with the tendency towards transience, there is room for variety; rapid change as embodied in the concept of future shock makes it obvious that "the inhabitants of the earth are divided not only by race, nation, religion or ideology, but also, in a sense, by their position in time"--i.e., that people are in different cultural states (Toffler 1970:43).[18]

The translator who wishes to translate against the canons could take heart from Holmes' observation that:

those rare translations that come to occupy primary as opposed to

secondary positions in the polysystem are frequently precisely the ones that, instead of conforming to the norms, take pride in breaking them. (Holmes 1988:109; emphasis added)

### 6.3 TRANSLATION DIDACTICS

It seems incomplete to discuss the how-factor without touching upon its normative aspects. About the only work that discusses this in any practical sense is Holmes' "Translation Theory, Translation Theories, Translation Studies, and the Translator". According to Holmes, a "field theory" of the entire range of the translation phenomenon would need to be built up of at least four partial theories:

We need a theory of the translation *process*, that is, the theory of what happens when people decide to translate something. We need a theory of the translation *product*, that is to say, what is specific to the translated text as a text; in what ways is it similar to and in what ways is it different from other kinds of texts, literary or other. We need a theory of the translation *function*, that is, how the translation works in the recipient society. And we need a theory of translation *didactics*. (Holmes 1988:95)

Holmes differentiates between them:

The first three of these partial theories . . . should be non-normative. They should be attempts to provide models by which we could analyse existing situations, describing not what the translation should be but what it is. The fourth, on the other hand, the theory of translation didactics, is necessarily normative. (Holmes 1988:95)

He makes the interesting observation that :

many of the theories of translation that we had up to now, while pretending to be theories of the translation process, are in fact theories for translation didactics. They are giving us material to train translators. (Holmes 1988:95)

Whilst agreeing with Holmes that "we have to make decisions about how to train translators whether we know the answers or not, simply because translators have to be trained" (Holmes 1988:95), it must also be borne in mind that, as Lefevere points out, "knowledge of the translation process is . . . 'personal knowledge,' the kind of knowledge that can be transmitted only by actually

working with somebody who has given proof that he or she possesses it". Lefevere warns of the dangers of attempting to "formalize and schematize what cannot really be formalized, not in any way that goes much beyond the intuitive knowledge of the process which practising translators keep stored in their heads", explaining that:

This is most emphatically not to say that I believe that the translation process should not, still less that it cannot, be taught. I simply want to submit the opinion that the most profitable way to teach it is not by means of models, which tend not only to become increasingly abstract, but also to exhibit a drift to what I would like to call "semantic terrorism," the devious process during which the model constructor forces his or her reader to invest heavily in trying to familiarize himself/herself with the jargon used by that constructor, only to find that the conclusions drawn by the model constructor might be (and in many cases actually have been) reached without this dubious expenditure of time and energy. (Lefevere 1981:54)

Holmes comments similarly that:

Many of those who consider themselves translation scholars are, as teachers in translator-training institutes in Western Europe or in translation workshops in America, confronted with the need to provide students with rules or norms, in the straightforward form of: Do this and not that. (Holmes 1988:109)

However, as Holmes observes:

Others, more empirically and/or historically oriented, tend to reject such a normative point of view as inimical to the scientific method. The controversy has raged furious, particularly in the Low Countries. (Holmes 1988:109)

The controversy, according to Holmes, "is easily solved":

For teachers training translators, operating in the field of applied translation studies, it is a major task to impart norms to students, for they must acquire the skills to function in today's society. But they must also function in tomorrow's, and since even a brief excursion across linguistic borders or incursion into translation history is enough to demonstrate how *hic et nunc* those norms are, it is also a part of the teacher's task to instill in his students an awareness of their relativity . . . (Holmes 1988:109)



### 6.4 REVIEWAL

The how-factor, according to the definition in Chapter IV, represents a spectrum of possible pathways along which a translation could proceed. However, because translation is most influenced by the who-factor, even the teaching of translation, as Holmes points out above, presents a controversy. A comparison of the problems of 'translation didactics' (as discussed by Lefevere and Holmes, above) and the problems of the study of Art reveals striking similarities. Perhaps, to avoid "semantic [and/or stylistic] terrorism" (Lefevere, above) that could harm the growth of the tradition, it might prove timely to quote here the "method of study" of Art as recommended by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

In "The Different Stages Of Art" (delivered at the Royal Academy, on December 11th, 1769), Reynolds divides the study of Art into three distinct periods:

the first . . . is confined to the rudiments . . . what grammar is in literature . . . a general preparation for whatever species of the art the student may afterwards choose for his more particular application. . . . [I]n the second period of study . . . his business is to learn all that has been known and done before his own time. Having hitherto received instructions from a particular master, he is now to consider the Art itself as his master. He must extend his capacity to more sublime and general instructions. Those perfections which lie scattered among various masters are now united in one general idea, which is henceforth to regulate his taste, and enlarge his imagination. With a variety of models thus before him, he will avoid that narrowness and poverty of conception which attends a bigoted admiration of a single master, and will cease to follow any favourite where he ceases to excel. This period is, however, still a time of subjection and discipline. Though the student will not resign himself blindly to any single authority, when he may have the advantage of consulting many, he must still be afraid of trusting his own judgment, and of deviating into any track where he cannot find the footsteps of some former master. (Reynolds undated:224-225)

The third period is interesting:

The third and last period emancipates the student from subjection to any

authority, but what he shall himself judge to be supported by reason. Confiding now in his own judgment, he will consider and separate those different principles to which different modes of beauty owe their original. In the former period he sought only to know and combine excellence, wherever it was to be found, into one idea of perfection: in this, he learns, what requires the most attentive survey and the most subtle disquisition, to discriminate perfections that are incompatible with each other. (Reynolds undated:224-225)

Reynolds' words are reminiscent of what Dryden advocates for translation.

Discussing Dryden's "middle course", T. Herbert Warren notes that:

this course . . . [is] the true "golden mean," the true course for the translator to pursue, whether we call it "Paraphrase," . . . or "translation with latitude," or, as we have suggested, "liberal" as opposed to literal translation. The question will be as to the amount of latitude permissible. One main consideration which should determine this will, if what was said at the outset be correct, at once appear. The latitude must be sufficient, but not more than sufficient; it must be the minimum which will suffice to make the translation idiomatic and natural in the language into which it is made. The skill of the translator will be found in reducing the quantity as nearly as may be to this minimum.

But another consideration affects this latitude--a consideration the enforcement of which is perhaps Dryden's chief merit--a consideration which many even of the very best translators have overlooked.[19] It is the preservation of the individual differentiating character of the original.

Warren reports that, according to Dryden:

No man is capable of translating poetry who . . . is not a master both of the author's language and of his own; nor must we understand the language only of the poet, but his peculiar turn of thought and expression, which are the characters that distinguish, and as it were individuate, him from all other writers. . . . If the fancy of Ovid be luxuriant, it is his character to be so; and if I retrench it, he is no longer Ovid. It will be replied that he receives advantage by this lopping of his superfluous branches, but I rejoyn that a translator has no such right . . .

Neither is it enough to give his author's sense in good English in poetical expressions and in musical numbers; there remains a yet harder task, and it is a secret of which few translators have sufficiently thought. It is the maintaining the character of an author which distinguishes him from all others, and makes him appear that individual poet whom you would interpret. (Warren 1909:111-113)

It is Binyon's ability to do this that impresses Pound most, as can be

gathered from the following:

Mr B. says in his preface that he wanted to produce a poem that could be read with pleasure in English. He has carefully preserved all the faults of his original.

This in the circumstances is the most useful thing he could have done. There are already 400 translations of Dante carefully presenting the English reader with a set of faults alien to the original, and therefore of no possible use to the reader who wants to understand Dante. . . . Mr. Binyon has not offered us a pre-Raphaelite version of Dante.

Note that even Shadwell in his delicate renderings of cantos 26 to 33 of the *Purgatorio* has given us something not Dante. . . . Binyon makes a very . . . sound [statement]: 'melodious smoothness is not the characteristic of Dante's verse.' . . . Dante, in taking up narrative, chucked out a number of MINOR criteria, as any writer of a long poem must in favour of a main virtue, and that main virtue . . . has possibly exaggerated. At any rate it is now possible to READ the 34 Canti . . . as a continuity.

\* \* \*

If, after all these years, I have [sic?] straight through the *Inferno*, and if, after all my previous voyages over that text, and even efforts to help the less trained, I have now a clearer conception of the *Inferno* as a whole than I had the week before last, that is a debt, and not one that I mean to be tardy in paying.

'The love of a thing consists in understanding of its perfections' (Spinoza).

Spinoza's statement distinctly includes knowing what they (the perfections) are NOT. Mr. Binyon has not offered a lollypop, neither did Dante. *Pensi lettori!* (Pound 1985:202-204; emphasis added)

Reynolds stresses the importance of the *appreciation* (as used in Art) of

past works:

nothing can come of nothing: he who has laid up no materials, can produce no combinations.

A student unacquainted with the attempts of former adventurers is always apt to overrate his own abilities; to mistake the most trifling excursions for discoveries of moment, and every coast new to him, for a new-found territory. If by chance he passes beyond his usual limits, he congratulates his own arrival at those regions which they who have steered a better course have long left behind them. (Reynolds undated:226)

Reynolds notes that:

The more extensive . . . your acquaintance is with the works of those who have excelled, the more extensive will be your power of invention; and what may appear still more like a paradox, the more original will be your conceptions. (Reynolds undated:226)

Reynolds realises how important it is to "avoid that narrowness and poverty of conception which attends a bigoted admiration of a single master", and "to cease to follow any favourite where he ceases to excel", but is aware that "the difficulty on this occasion is to determine what ought to be proposed as models of excellence, and who ought to be considered as the properest guides". He ponders over the possibilities:

To a young man just arrived [in a new country], many of the present [artists] of that country are ready enough to obtrude their percepts, and to offer their own performances as examples of that perfection which they affect to recommend. The modern, however, who recommends *himself* as a standard, may justly be suspected as ignorant of the true end, and unacquainted with the proper object, of the art which he professes. To follow such a guide, will not only retard the student, but mislead him.

On whom then can they rely? The answer is obvious: those great masters who have travelled the same road with success are the most likely to conduct others. The works of those who have stood the test of ages, have a claim to that respect and veneration to which no modern can pretend. The duration and stability of their fame is sufficient to evince that it has not been suspended upon the slender thread of fashion and caprice, but bound to the human heart by every tie of sympathetic approbation. (Reynolds undated:226)

These words of Reynolds emphasise one of the major problems of verse translation in the Malayo-English tradition--the lack of excellent models to study.

**NOTES FOR CHAPTER VI**

- [1] See Lefevere (1975:3-4), for example.
- [2] Hofstadter (1980:378) labels pathways which are taken routinely in going from one state to another as *possible* pathways and names the pathways "which can only be followed if one is led through them by the hand" as *potential* pathways--i.e., pathways which would be followed only if special external circumstances arise. Consider the translation of Homer into English. A published translation would be but one of several possibilities: hence the Homer of Chapman, Dryden, Pope, Rieu, Fitzgerald, Lattimore and Sisson, respectively.

The choice of the path decided upon is influenced by the independent variables identified earlier. Each independent variable acts as a weighting factor in deciding which path would finally be traversed. Diction, for one, would be partially determined by taste (other determinants being translating ability and vocabulary possessed), indicating the weighting effect of the who-factor.

A fictitious example of a 'potential' pathway would be a translation of the *Odyssey* in the style of James Joyce's *Ulysses*.

- [3] See also Chapter III, section 3.3.
- [4] Snell-Hornby notes the following:

A translation is directly dependent on its prescribed function, which must be made clear by the commissioner (in professional practice usually a foregone conclusion). (Snell-Hornby 1988:44)

- [5] According to Holmes:

there is an extremely close relationship between the kind of verse form a translator chooses and the kind of total effect his translation

achieves. It is, in fact, a relationship so central to the entire problem of verse translation that its study deserves our utmost attention--study, not in order to arrive at normative dicta: So it must be, and not otherwise; but to come to understand the nature of various kinds of metapoem, each of which can never be more than a single interpretation of the original whose image it darkly mirrors. (Holmes 1988:30)

- [6] Also in Hasnah (in Noor Ein and Atiah, eds. 1991:3-5).
- [7] Belloc (1931) seems to have used the term /transmute/ in a similar sense. for when he advises the translator to 'transmute boldly' it is because to him the essence of translating is 'the resurrection of an alien thing in a native body' (as discussed in Bassnett-McGuire 1980:117).
- [8] The explanation for the term *imitatio* is as given in *SOED*, i.e.: 'A method of translating looser than paraphrase, in which modern examples and illustrations are used for ancient, or domestick for foreign' (J.)
- [9] Holmes (1988:45) discusses "exoticizing" as opposed to "naturalizing". Both trans-naturalizing and trans-posing as defined in the proposed nomenclature seems to be similar to *imitatio* as defined by Dr. Johnson (see note [8] above).
- [10] Newmark (1981:71) makes the interesting observation that "Proper names in fairy stories, folk tales and children's literature are often translated on the ground that children and fairies are the same the world over". An early translation of Cinderella by the precursors of the tradition would seem to bear this out: Cinderella becomes *Chendralela*, while her fairy godmother becomes the Malay /*nenek kebayan*/.
- [11] Newmark (1988:45) proposes a somewhat polarized spectrum, in which the modes are labelled: word-for-word translation, literal translation, faithful

translation, semantic translation, adaptation, free translation, idiomatic translation and communicative translation.

- [12] Other important sources are *Essay on the Principles of Translation* (Tyler 1791); "The Art Of Translating" (Warren 1909); *On Translation* (Brower 1959); *The Craft And Context Of Translation* (Arrowsmith and Shattuck eds. 1961); *The Nature of Translation* (Holmes et al. eds. 1970); *Proteus His Lies His Truth* (Adams 1973); *Translating Poetry: Seven Strategies And A Blueprint* (Lefevere 1975); *Literature And Translation* (Holmes et al. 1978); *The Translator's Handbook* (Picken ed. 1983); *Symposium Of The Whole: A Range Of Discourse Toward An Ethnopoetics* (Rothenberg and Rothenberg eds. 1983); *Translation* (Frawley ed. 1984); *The Translator's Art* (Radice and Reynolds eds. 1987); *Translated!* (Holmes 1988); *Translating Poetry, The Double Labyrinth* (Weissbort 1989) and *The Art Of Translation: Voices From The Field* (Warren ed. 1989).
- [13] Though not in the reverse direction, Holmes notes.
- [14] The quotation appears in "The World Of The Sagas", in *Secondary Worlds* (1968).
- [15] Bassnett-McGuire was commenting on the translations which encouraged the adoption of the sonnet into English prosody.
- [16] Holmes himself admits that:

To accept Auden's criterion out of hand would mean to decide that much of contemporary Dutch poetry (including most of the verse of the Generation of the Fifties), as well as much of the finest Dutch poetry of the past, from Vondel to Verweij, either cannot at all be translated for this generation, or can be translated only by a kind of inverse alchemy, transmuting the gold into baser metal. Fortunately not all discerning readers of poetry in English are quite

so restrictive in their demands. (Holmes 1988:15)

A parallel consideration could be made for the translation of traditional Malay verse into English.

- [17] Nicholson is of the opinion that:

Rhyme is an indispensable element in Arabic and Persian poetry, and there are other reasons why it should not be abandoned willingly by translators who use English metres. For one thing, unrhymed couplets soon become tedious, while in unconfined blank verse every trace of the original form disappears. (Nicholson 1987:xii)

Holmes' observation on translating Martial is interesting:

at a certain point I became convinced that probably rhyme is the right vehicle for dealing with these very taut, witty epigrams of Martial, quite different from the poetry of Catullus. So that perhaps what we need to do, when choosing forms for translating classical poetry, is to approach each poet differently. You can't reproduce Latin verse forms. We tried it in the sixteenth century, in English, and it just doesn't work. I don't think that the many translations of the Iliad and the Odyssey, for instance, into hexameters work. The hexameters get in the way - for me, at any rate. Many have chosen simply to use free verse, but free verse lacks the discipline, it seems to me, that these poets were imposing on themselves. And it is important that there is such a discipline. For each poet I try to see if I can find a formal principle which will reflect that poet's style, and I think that I, or Jacob Lowland, was right to decide that Martial needs rhyme. (Holmes in Weissbort 1989:63)

- [18] See also Bassnett-McGuire (1980:41).
- [19] Warren (1909:111, footnote) notes that it is this that makes Jowett's Plato so great a success, his Thucydides, in point of style, comparatively a failure. "The Plato is like Plato, the Thucydides is often not like Thucydides. No one reading it would understand why the original is considered so crabbed and condensed."



## CHAPTER VII: OF CONCLUSIONS AND CONCLUDING

If Pegasus will let *thee* only ride him,  
Spurning my clumsy efforts to o'erstride him,  
Some fresh expedient the Muse will try,  
And walk on stilts, although she cannot fly.

\*\*\*

This is now--this was erst  
Proposition the first--and Problem the first

- S. T. Coleridge -  
in "A Mathematical Problem"

"Concluding a [study] on translation is probably impossible", remarks Roger T. Bell in the "Envoi" to his book, *Translation and Translating, Theory and Practice* (1991), and sums up most succinctly the situation at this point in the study. The preliminary nature of the research means that: much more needs to be done, and that it would be easier to raise questions than to come to conclusions. This might not be too bad after all, if, as Shaw observes, "when we . . . arrive at a . . . conclusion . . . we . . . must close our minds . . . with a snap, and act dogmatically on our conclusions".[1] In view of these considerations, this chapter will conclude the study in the manner suggested by Estelle M. Phillips and D. S. Pugh in the book, *How To Get A Ph.D., A Handbook For Students And Their Supervisors*. [2]

### 7.1 REVIEWAL OF STUDY

Initially, for lack of 'pioneering' work to draw upon, the study seeks only to compile and analyse the problems of translating Malay verse into English. However, because it emerges that the problems encountered are specific examples of the general problems of translation, especially of verse translation from a Language of Limited Diffusion (LLD), the need for a general theoretical

framework against which the tradition could be studied, arises.

Anomalous features of the tradition direct the search toward a purely descriptive theory, as advocated by, for example, Gideon Toury, Itamar Even-Zohar and André Lefevere. However, as shown in Chapter III, the relatively new (and anomalous) tradition described in Chapters I and II, does not qualify for study using the (Polysystemic) paradigms established. It could not, therefore, be analysed using PS methods.

This conclusion, however, does not lead to abandonment of the descriptive approach. If anything, by showing the inadequacy of the method to cope with the situation, it emphasises the need for such an approach; further search shows that if the purpose of translation theory is:

to reach an understanding of the processes undertaken in the act of translation and, not, as is so commonly misunderstood, to provide a set of norms for effecting the perfect translation[,] (Bassnett-McGuire 1980:37)

then, as Roger T. Bell points out:

we must--following the proposal made by Bassnett-McGuire . . . --adopt a descriptive rather than a prescriptive approach to our investigation of the process . . . (Bell 1991:22)

Hence, Bell proposes that:

instead of making subjective and arbitrary judgements on which one translation is 'better' than another and insisting that 'goodness' resides in the faithful adherence to an imposed set of commandments, our orientation has to be towards the objective specification of the . . . [pathways] through which the translator ['travels'] as the source text in the original language is transformed into the target text; a focus on the process which creates the translation rather than on the translation itself . . . (Bell 1991:22)[3]

Focussing on the process forces acceptance of the existence of what Rose et al. (1981) term the *Translation Spectrum*. It is difficult, however, to describe the spectrum objectively using current terms. The study is forced to face the

question, "what is translation?", and to attempt to answer it, objectively. Guided by Marilyn Ferguson's (1986) useful reminder, a working definition is proposed in Chapter IV.[4]

The definition gives rise to a spectrum of translation, but it is found that it cannot be described objectively using current terminology, which, as Bassnett-McGuire (1980) points out, embodies a system of values. An alternative, professional terminology, as Holmes (1988) <sup>2</sup>for~~ces~~, would be needed. The study proposes a set of terms with the prefix *trans-*, which gives a neutral description of the various modes of translating.

#### 7.1.1 Limitations Of Study

The major limitation of the study is that it could have recourse to only a limited number of sources,[5] i.e., only to writings in English. As such, there is a vast array of writings which is not available to it—from Russia, Europe, even Japan. Consequently, too, it has not been possible to check if the findings herein have been recorded elsewhere. But this is a general problem faced by researchers in Third World countries, whose only European language is English. It is noted that although there are writers (in English) who are aware of the problem and have taken the trouble to translate into English quotations from other European languages, they form a rare few. It is hoped that more such translations would be available in future, as it is hoped that this study might awaken the realisation for the need to translate writings on the theory of translation into English.

A dilemma in the writing up of the research findings arises from the realisation that, for the study to be of some use to practitioners in Third World countries, and because so many of the important works are difficult to obtain for

a Third World student of translation, those sources that are significant have to be quoted extensively. Such a strategy, whilst useful, would unavoidably affect the flow of the discourse.

Another limitation is that Translation Studies have made great leaps within the last three decades--it has therefore not been possible to investigate all the available sources.

## 7.2 CONTRIBUTIONS OF PAST WORKS

As stated in the Acknowledgements, the approach is based on a few of the many questions raised in Bassnett-McGuire's (1980) classic introduction to the discipline, *Translation Studies*. This book, meanwhile, like most of the other books after it, seems to have been greatly influenced by the writings of James S. Holmes. Indeed, a study of *Translated!*, a (1988) collection of Holmes' papers on literary translation and translation studies would show that Holmes has contemplated ~~by~~ almost every aspect of the subject. Susan Bassnett-McGuire's book, and many of the useful works of the eighties, such as Marilyn Gaddis Rose's *Translation Spectrum* (1981), Peter Newmark's *Approaches To Translation* (1981) and *A Textbook Of Translation* (1988), Mary Snell-Hornby's *Translation Studies, An Integrated Approach* (1988), and more recently, Roger T. Bell's *Translation and Translating, Theory and Practice* (1991) and Basil Hatim and Ian Mason's *Discourse and The Translator* (1991), seem to be responses to James S. Holmes' call for a systematic, multidisciplinary approach to the study of translation.

Useful hints and comments on translation and translation procedures can be found scattered in many publications, and these have shaped the attitude adopted towards the translated texts discussed in this study. Books such as Brower's *On Translation* (1959), Arrowsmith and Shattuck's *The Craft and Context of Translation* (1961), Adam's *Proteus His Lies His Truth* (1973), Radice and Reynold's *The Translator's Art* (1987), Warren's *The Art of Translation: Voices From The Field* (1989), and Weissbort's *Translating Poetry, The Double Labyrinth* (1989) provide useful insight into translation procedures and the problems of translation.

The following works have been found to be useful in broadening the perspective on translation and translation studies, works such as Tytler's *Essay On The Principles Of Translation* (1791), T. Herbert Warren's "The Art Of Translation" (1909), Holmes' *The Nature Of Translation* (1970), *Literature And Translation* (1978) and *Translated!* (1988), Steiner's *After Babel* (1975), Lefevere's *Translating Poetry: Seven Strategies And A Blueprint* (1975) and *Translating Literature: The German Tradition* (1977), Webb's *The Violet In The Crucible* (1976), Kelly's *The True Interpreter* (1979), Rose's *Translation Spectrum* (1981), Pound's writings on translation, House's *A Model For Translation Quality Assessment* (1981), Mukherjee's *Translation As Discovery* (1981), Rothenberg and Rothenberg's *Symposium Of The Whole: A Range Of Discourse Toward An Ethnopoetics* (1983), Van Slype's *Better Translation for Better Communication* (1983), Frawley's *Translation* (1984), Graham's *Difference In Translation* (1985), Hermans' *The Manipulation of Literature* (1985) and *Second Hand* (1985). These writings, reflecting the many and varied

observations/comments and opinions on translation, enable an objective approach to the study.

Although many great works have been produced in the last three decades, Susan Bassnett-McGuire's book stands out as having "*questioned hidden assumptions and called attention to contradictions*", which, according to Marilyn Ferguson, is "the [necessary] first step in breaking . . . old paradigm[s]" (Ferguson 1986:54-55). James S. Holmes' writings, collected in the volume *Translated!* (1988) contain the blueprint for the development of the field, and have listed probably all of the tasks to be tackled.

### **7.3 ASSESSMENT OF STUDY**

The study hopes to have proved the point Bassnett-McGuire makes, which is that, if a neutral terminology could be found, then discourse on translation might be able to free itself from the dichotomy which has been the cause of irreconcilable differences in the discipline and across disciplines. By focussing on the working definition of translation, and adopting a neutral nomenclature, and hence deviating attention from past controversies, this study hopes to have opened up new venues for investigation.

Focussing on the independent variables, for example, would enable an objective study of each of the variables. A study of the who-factor might lead to studies in bilingualism which might prove useful not only to the Malayo-English tradition, but also to the teaching of English to a bilingually stratified society.

Accepting the various modes of translating would call for a different approach to the analysis and/or assessment of translation, which might eventually lead to the compilation of "a required repertory of features always to be analysed,

regardless of what specific text is involved" (Holmes 1988:89, also in Holmes 1976:80). The study hopes to have demonstrated the need for a detailed analysis of James S. Holmes' suggestions for the development of the field.

The "didactics of translation" is important in the development of the pedagogy of translation. Thus far, the awareness that translation is an art, perhaps, has made field experts avoid being didactic. The study hopes to have shown that because translation is an art, the raw talent in the field needs to be polished and might perhaps be polished in the way suggested by Sir Joshua Reynolds in Chapter VI. Stylistics and applied stylistics, as in the art of parody, then would foreseeably play an important role in the teaching of translations.

This study hopes to have fulfilled its aims of compiling and analysing the problems of translating Malay verse into English, and hopes to have made contributions, however meagre, toward the compilation of a "repertory of features always to be analysed", as suggested by Holmes, above, for the Malayo-English case. If this study has made any contribution to knowledge at all, it must be remembered that, as Coleridge points out, "**The dwarf sees farther than the giant, [only because] he has the giant's shoulder to mount on**" (Coleridge, in *The Friend*, 1828).[6]

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER VII

- [1] George Bernard Shaw in the Preface of *Androcles and the Lion*, as quoted in *The Macmillan Treasury Of Relevant Quotations*, compiled by Edward F. Murphy (1978).
- [2] In *How To Get A Ph.D., A Handbook For Students And Their Supervisors*, Estelle M. Phillips and S. D. Pugh points out that:

The spelling out of your contribution is the final element . . . It is here that you underline the significance of your analysis, point out the limitations in your material, suggest what new work is now appropriate, and so on. In the most general terms it is a discussion as to why and in what way the background theory and the focal theory that you started with are now different as a result of your research work. Thus your successors (who include, of course, yourself) now face a different situation when determining what their research work should be since they now have to take account of your work. (Phillips and Pugh 1987:55)

- [3] This endorses James S. Holmes earlier reminder that:

[Although] it is very useful to make a distinction between the product-oriented study of translations and the process-oriented study of translating . . . th[e] distinction cannot give . . . [leave] to ignore the self-evident fact that the nature of the product cannot be understood without a comprehension of the nature of the process. (Holmes 1978:70)

(Holmes in "Describing Literary Translations: Models and Methods", which is a paper presented in the colloquium "Literature And Translation", held at the Catholic University of Leuven on 27-29 April 1976.)

See also de Beaugrand's (1978:26) argument for just such a stand, which is also strongly endorsed by Bell (1991:22).

- [4] According to Marilyn Ferguson (1986:70), to grasp what something signifies, "a working definition" is required first of all.
- [5] James S. Holmes makes a similar lament. Proposing a series of these



about the theory of translation, which are based on his "reading in traditional and modern translation theory" and his "ruminations on the state of the art", he admits that, although his reading has been "quite extensive - and intensive":

There is . . . at least one major lacuna in it. Since I do not know Russian, I have read only that small tip of the vast Soviet translation-theory iceberg that juts above the surface of Western thinking by having been translated. Far too little *has* been translated, far too much has *not*, and hence the work of a great many theorists . . . remain for me little more than hearsay. (Holmes 1988:99)

- [6] As quoted in *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations* (:118:n6), which derives from Lucan's "*Pigmei gigantum humeris impositi plusquam ipsi gigantes vident*", as given in the same footnote.

## EPILOGUE

No epilogues, I pray you, for your play needs no excuse. Never excuse.

- Shakespeare -

*A Midsummer Night's Dream* V, i, 363

Chapter VII reviewed the study; what remains now is for this section to remind translators of LLD literature of their added responsibility to the From-text. This point is brought up by James S. Holmes, who, whilst realising that ideally,:

... [different translations] will continue to exist side by side, each supplementing the other[s] as a somewhat differently faceted commentary on the many-faceted original ... (Holmes 1988:58)

is also aware that:

the problem, translating from [a LLD] ... [is that] *this* translation will probably be the only one ever made of this poem in the near future. So you have an important responsibility to the poet, to the text. (Holmes in Weissborn ed. 1989:58)

It is assumed here that a true translator or *The True Interpreter* (Kelly 1979) would not take her/his responsibility to the text lightly. For such a translator, this study hopes to have awakened the realisation that past translations need not be precedents, nor definitive versions, nor present trends the norm, for trends change, but that instead, as Wallace Stevens reminds:

The [epi]logues are over. It is a question, now  
of final belief. So, say that final belief  
Must be in a fiction. It is time to choose. (Stevens in "Asides on the Oboe"  
1942, st.1; emphasis added)

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## APPENDIX A

### Nature's Gentleman

He boasts nor wealth nor high descent, yet he may claim to be  
A gentleman to match the best of any pedigree:  
His blood hath run in peasant veins through many a noteless year;  
Yet, search in every prince's court, you'll rarely find his peer.  
For he's one of Nature's Gentlemen, the best of every time.

He owns no mansion in the Square, inherits no estate;  
He hath no stud, no hounds, no duns, no laqueys at his gate;  
He drinks no wine, and wears no gloves, his coat is thread-bare worn;  
Yet he's a gentleman no less, and he was gentle born.  
He is one of Nature's Gentlemen, the best of every time.

His manners are not polish'd; he has never learn'd to bow;  
But his heart is gentle.--gentle manner out of it doth grow,  
Like a flower whose fragrance blesseth all within its beauteous reach,  
Or the dainty bloom upon a plum, or the softness of a peach.  
For he's one of Nature's gentle ones, the best of every time.

As true old Chaucer sang to us, so many years ago,  
He is the gentlest man who dares the gentlest deeds to do:  
However rude his birth or state, however low his place,  
He is the gentle man whose life right gentle thought doth grace.  
He is one of Nature's Gentlemen, the best of every time.

What though his hand is hard and rough with years of honest pains.--  
Who ever thought the knight disgraced by honour's weather-stains?  
What though no Herald's College in their books his line can trace,  
We can see that he is gentle by the smile upon his face.  
For he's one of Nature's Gentlemen, the best of every time.

- Linton -

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Appendix B.

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## APPENDIX C

Items C.1-C.3 are biographical notes on Hugh Clifford, as provided by William R. Roff (1966) in the Introduction to *Stories by Sir Hugh Clifford*. Items C.4-C.6 are samples of Clifford's writings which reflect his feelings towards Malaya, especially Pahang, and the Malays.

### Item C.1: Of Clifford, Roff writes:

Hugh Clifford . . . in 1883, at the age of seventeen, came out from a somewhat sheltered boyhood in England to join the Civil Service of what were then styled the Protected Malay States. He was to remain there, except for brief intervals, for almost twenty years, throughout the larger part of the formative period of British colonial rule. And because . . . he was not only 'a thorough Anglo-Saxon, clean-bred, and a good specimen of his race', but an unusually imaginative and sensitive man, strongly drawn--often despite himself--to the strange folk around him, the mark left on Clifford by Malaya and the Malays was deep and enduring. It found expression in the corpus of writings which stands to his name. During his years in the peninsula, and later as a senior British official in other colonial territories which moved him less, he wrote four novels and some eighty short stories and descriptive pieces, the great majority set in Malaya. . . . [W]hatever their shortcomings as fine literature and however unacceptable many of the basic assumptions underlying them must appear today, they form an important and sometimes moving record of the early days of colonial rule, and of one side of that ambiguous phenomenon, the colonial relationship. (Roff 1966:vii-viii)

### Item C.2: Of Clifford's ancestry and family background:

Hugh Charles Clifford was born in London on 5 March 1866, the eldest son of Colonel Henry Clifford and a grandson of the seventh Baron Clifford of Chudleigh, in Devon. His mother, Josephine, was the only daughter of Joseph Anstice, who before his untimely death from tuberculosis in 1836 (at the age of twenty-eight) had been a brilliant student at Oxford (where he took a double First in Classics and Mathematics) and a young and more than usually promising professor of classical literature at King's College, London. Josephine herself had literary aspirations, and as a young woman contributed regularly to the periodicals edited at that time by Charles Dickens, and received . . . much encouragement from the great man. Perhaps this side of Hugh's ancestry helped later to stimulate his own urge to express himself in words. On his father's side, less noted artistically despite Colonel Clifford's penchant for sketching the field of battle, Hugh belonged to one of the leading Roman Catholic landed families in England, and could if he wished trace his

descent back to the time of Henry II in the twelfth century. He numbered among his forebears in the direct line Sir Lewis de Clifford, Ambassador to France for Richard II. and Thomas, first Baron Clifford of Chudleigh, who was Principal Secretary of State and Lord Treasurer to Charles II in the 1670's and gave his initial 'C' to the group of Ministers known as the CABAL.

Though in later years, as a result in part no doubt of the Test Act and other penalties visited in England upon Roman Catholics, the Cliffords had withdrawn somewhat from public life, they continued to represent an important section of the Catholic landed aristocracy, and to supply a steady stream of younger sons to the Church and (in the nineteenth century) to the Army. One of Hugh's uncles became Roman Catholic Bishop of Clifton, and his father, the third son of the seventh Baron Clifford, served with distinction on or beyond the boundaries of Empire in the eighteen forties and fifties--in the Kaffir Wars in South Africa, in the Crimea (where he earned the VC at the Battle of Inkerman), and in the Opium Wars in China. The later part of his career, during Hugh's early boyhood, was spent mainly on the Staff in England, where he rose to the rank of Major-General and was created a Knight Cross of St Michael and St George by a grateful queen. (Roff 1966:viii-ix)

Item C.3: Of his childhood:

The heartland of the Clifford family lay in the West Country, especially Devonshire and Somerset, and it was here that a large part of Hugh Clifford's childhood was spent--in the great manor houses and one-time Royalist castles belonging to his own and allied families. *These ancient houses had, and in many cases still have today, certain pronounced characteristics which it is perhaps worth dwelling on for a moment, for the light they may shade on Hugh's later imaginative response to Malaya and the Malays. Unlike most Church of England manors, in and looking on to the villages of which they were an integral part, the great Roman Catholic houses of the West were inward-looking enclaves somewhat set apart from the life around them, and filled with a strong aura of medieval and often romantic unworldliness. Facing into their own high-walled parks, full of chapels, crucifixes and religious statuary, they gave to the world as many priests and nuns as men of action, and held a distant, if firmly paternal, castle-and-cottage relationship with their extra-manorial dependents, which seemed to partake of an earlier and simpler vision of society than that of the late nineteenth century. It is hard not to see in this a shaping influence upon Hugh's later romanticization of Malay life, with its 'court and kampong' dichotomy and its supposedly medieval system of values, and upon his own strong bent for benevolent paternalism and mistrust of material progress.*

Hugh Clifford received his formal education not, as might have been expected, at one of the great English public schools, but at a private tutoring establishment run by a friend of the family. Exactly how long he spent here is not known, but it is clear that it served him sufficiently well

to enable him to pass the entrance examination for Sandhurst in 1883. He seemed destined to follow in his father's footsteps and make a career in the Army. What deflected him from this course is not recorded--perhaps the death of his father in the same year affected his decision, perhaps he thought the army insufficiently romantic or idealistic. At any rate, he decided instead to go East and join the Civil Service of the Malay States, of which territories his father's cousin, Frederick Weld, as Governor of the Straits Settlements, was now High Commissioner. Accordingly, in the autumn of 1883, the young Hugh Clifford arrived in Malaya to take up a position as a Cadet in the Residency of Hugh Low in Perak, the first state to come under protectorate rule. (Roff 1966:x; emphasis added)

**Item C.4:** An excerpt from "In The Half-Light", in *Malayan Monochromes*

(1913):

I had stepped out of the present into the past; out of our modern civilisation into the old adventuresome, romantic life which of old had been dear to me. For me too its memories held the glamour and the glory of youth.--were hallowed by the "light that never was on land or sea"; and at my first coming that evening, with the past suddenly revived for me by the old familiar sights and experiences . . . I too had been stirred with sentimental regrets for the old order, that in passing had deprived me of so much of my individual freedom and liberty, and had penned me in a present too narrow for my needs.

**Item C.5:** An excerpt from the Preface to *Studies In Brown Humanity* (1898),

where Malaya, or perhaps Pahang, is described as:

a land which has become very dear to me, which I know intimately, and where the best years of my life have hitherto been spent. . . . I shall probably hurt no man's complacency, if I say that the things and places of which I tell are matters concerning which the ideas of the vast majority of my countrymen are both hazy and fragmentary. But none the less, the Peninsula and its sepia-coloured peoples are curious and worthy of attention, and therefore they deserve to be better known by the men of the race which has taken the destiny of the Malays of the Peninsula under its special charge.

**Item C.6:** An excerpt from "At The Heels Of The White Man" in *Studies In  
Brown  
Human Humanity* (1898):

We Fettered Folk have felt your yoke,  
For heavy years and long;  
We've learned to sight where tortuous Right  
Breaks loose from tangled wrong.

To us the twain, 'tis all too plain,  
 Be like as pea to pea,  
 But ye be wise, and so our eyes  
 Must see as White Men see.

Your rule is just, and since we must,  
 We learn to kiss the yoke;  
 You we'll obey, by night and day,  
 But not your dark-skin'd Folk!  
 The bearded Sikh, and Tamil sleek,  
 With them we will not deal,  
 Nor with the throng that crowds along  
 Close to the White Man's heels!

To begin to understand anything at all about the Malay, you must realise, from the first, that he is intensely self-respecting. He possesses, in a high degree, one of the most characteristic qualities of the English gentleman,--he is absolutely and supremely sure of himself. It does not occur to him to assume airs of equality or superiority, for the very simple reason that he is quite satisfied with himself as he is,--as it pleased God to fashion him,--and this, instead of making him unbearably conceited, as might well be the case, causes him to take his place in any society quite naturally with comfort to both himself and his neighbours, since he is not for ever mentally comparing his own position with that of others. Thus one may make an intimate friend of a Malay, may share the same hut with him for long periods at a time, and may talk to him of all things within his comprehension, without there being any risk of familiarity breeding contempt, or of the Malay taking advantage of his position to dig you in the ribs, or to call you by your Christian name. He respects himself far too much to dream of taking liberties, or to be otherwise than courteous and respectful towards those with whom he has to deal. And this, be it remembered, is a national characteristic; for everything that I have said applies with equal force to the humblest Malay villager, and to the most courtly Native Chief. There are, of course, many lamentable instances of Malays who have been educated out of this self-respecting reserve, and who have become almost as offensive and familiar as a low-caste European, but the existence of these unfortunates must be placed to the credit of the White Men, whose presence has produced them, and not debited against the Malay, with whom they have nothing in common. Any way you look at them, these abnormal developments are a subject for tears.

We English have an immense deal to answer for, and it will be interesting to see exactly how our account stands when the good and the bad that we have done,--both with the most excellent intentions,--face one another, in double columns, on the pages of the Recording Angel's Day-Book.

## APPENDIX D

Excerpts from the *Information on The Toyota Foundation and Its Activities*  
pamphlet:

### About The Foundation:

The Toyota Foundation, a private, nonprofit, grant-making organization dedicated to the goals of realizing greater human fulfillment and contributing to the development of a human-oriented society, was endowed in October 1974 by the Toyota Motor Corporation.

The Foundation's total endowment is approximately . . . US\$47 million. . . .

The main activity of the International Division is the administration of the international grant program and such other programs as the "Know Our Neighbors" Translation-Publication Program. The Foundation's international grant program is aimed primarily toward the developing countries and supports projects that best meet the needs of their present-day society. Recently, this program has been focusing on projects in Southeast Asia.

### About the "Know Our Neighbors" Translation-Publication Program in Southeast Asia:

This program covers translation- and publication-related expenses in order to encourage the translation and publication in Southeast Asian languages of Japanese literary works and works on the culture, society, history, and so forth of Japan, as well as results of research conducted by Japanese researchers studying Southeast Asia. At present Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, and Thailand participate in this program.

### About the "Know Our Neighbors" Translation-Publication Program Among Southeast Asian Countries:

This program covers translation- and publication-related expenses in order to encourage the translation and publication in Southeast Asian languages of literary works and works on the culture, society, history, and so forth of other Southeast Asian countries. At present Thailand participates in this program.

From G. K. Chesterton's *The Collected Poems of G. K. Chesterton* (London:  
Methuen) 1939:46-49

VARIATIONS OF AN AIR:

Composed on Having To Appear In A Pageant As Old King Cole

Old King Cole was a merry old soul,  
And a merry old soul was he;  
He called for his pipe,  
He called for his bowl,  
And he called for his fiddlers three.

*After Lord Tennyson*

Cole, that unwearied prince of Colchester,  
Growing more gay with age and with long days  
Deeper in laughter and desire of life,  
As that Virginian climber on our walls  
Flames scarlet with the fading of the year:  
Called for his wassail and that other weed  
Virginian also, from the western woods  
Where English Raleigh checked the boast of Spain,  
And lighting joy with joy, and piling up  
Pleasure as crown for pleasure, bade men bring  
Those three, the minstrels whose emblazoned coats  
Shone with the oyster-shells of Colchester;  
And these three played, and playing grew more fain  
of mirth and music; till the heathen came,  
And the King slept beside the northern sea.

*After W. B. Yeats*

Of an old King in a story  
From the grey sea-folk I have heard,  
Whose heart was no more broken  
Than the wings of a bird.

As soon as the moon was silver  
And the thin stars began,  
He took his pipe and his tankard,  
Like an old peasant man.

And three tall shadows were with him  
 And came at his command;  
 And played before him for ever  
 The fiddles of fairyland.

And he died in the young summer  
 Of the world's desire:  
 Before our hearts were broken  
 Like sticks in a fire.

*After Robert Browning*

Who smoke-snorts toasts o' My Lady Nicotine,  
 Kicks stuffing out of Pussyfoot, bids his trio  
 Stick up their Stradivarii (that's the plural)  
 Or near enough, my fatheads: *nimum*  
*Vicina Cremonae*; that's a bit too near).  
 Is there some stockfish fails to understand?  
 Catch hold o' the notion, bellow and blurt back  
 "Cole"?  
 Must I bawl lessons from a horn-book, howl,  
 Cat-call the cat-gut "fiddles"? Fiddlesticks!

*After Walt Whitman*

Me clairvoyant,  
 Me conscious of you, old camarado,  
 Needing no telescope, longnette, field-glass, opera-  
 glass, myopic pince-nez,  
 Me piercing two thousand years with eye naked  
 and not ashamed;  
 The crown cannot hide you from me:  
 Musty old feudal-heraldic trappings cannot hide you  
 from me,  
 I perceive that you drink.  
 (I am drinking with you. I am as drunk as you  
 are.)  
 I see you inhaling tobacco, puffing, smoking,  
 spitting  
 (I do not object to your spitting).  
 You prophetic of American largeness,  
 You anticipating the broad masculine manners of  
 these States;  
 I see in you also there are movements, tremors,  
 tears, desire for the melodious,  
 I salute your three violinists, endlessly making  
 vibrations,

Rigid, relentless, capable of going on for ever;  
They play my accompaniment; but I shall take no  
notice of any accompaniment:  
I myself am a complete orchestra.  
So long.

*After Swinbourne*

In the time of old sin without sadness  
And golden with wastage of gold  
Like the gods that grow old in their gladness  
Was the king that was glad, growing old;  
And with sound of loud lyres from his palace  
The voice of his oracles spoke,  
And the lips that were red from his chalice  
Were splendid with smoke.  
When the weed was as flame for a token  
And the wine was as blood for a sign;  
And upheld in his hands and unbroken  
The fountains of fire and of wine.  
And a song without speech, without singer,  
Stung the soul of a thousand in three  
As the flesh of the earth has to sting her,  
The soul of the sea.